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THE TIMES

No. 65,165

MONDAY JANUARY 16 1995

Court martial system 'breaches human rights'

Convicted servicemen take cases to European commission



Elliot: "I don't think I had a fair trial"

By FRANCIS GIBB
LEGAL CORRESPONDENT

THE court martial system is facing an unprecedented challenge before the European Commission of Human Rights. A dossier of 12 cases has been presented to the Commission alleging that the courts martial operated by the RAF and the Army are in breach of Article Six of the European Convention on Human Rights, which guarantees the right to a fair trial. A case alleging similar breaches by naval courts is expected to be lodged soon.

The lead case of the 12 is being brought by a former RAF sergeant, Peter Elliot, of Skirraugh, Humberside, who was sentenced to nine

months in prison after being found guilty of using threatening, abusive and insulting behaviour. Mr Elliot, 37, who was an RAF policeman, was dismissed after 19 years in the service and is now unemployed.

The dossier of cases, submitted by Gilbert Blades, a solicitor from Lincoln, has crossed the first hurdle on its way to the European Court of Human Rights. Last month the commission examined the application and decided to notify the Government about it. The next stage is likely to be an oral hearing.

Mr Blades argues that the court martial system is unjust. He says it

discriminates against the accused and does not have the same standards of fairness, or burden of proof, as in the criminal courts generally; and that there is no proper and fully independent right of appeal against sentence. He wants the system changed, as in Canada, to give service personnel the right to elect trial by jury.

"What runs through all the cases I have been handling is that these people do not get a fair trial," he said. "The disciplinary panel is appointed by the prosecutor, not picked at random, so you have the same people effectively being prose-

cution, judge and jury." If convicted of a charge such as assault, the accused had no realistic avenue of appeal against sentence, he added.

The Ministry of Defence maintains that the court martial system is laid down by Acts of Parliament and all recruits are told that they will be subject to the system. It says that, as far as possible and where appropriate, the system mirrors aspects of the civilian system but also has to reflect the special circumstances of service life.

A serviceman can seek leave to appeal against conviction to the Courts-Martial Appeal Court,

where the judges are drawn from the Court of Appeal, but an appeal against sentence is only by way of petition to the Board of the service concerned.

In the case of Mr Elliot, who is married with two children, leave to go to the Courts-Martial Appeal Court was refused. He said: "I don't think I had a fair trial. There was no corroboration — no evidence really of any kind to prove the charges — just one person's word against another. The trial was sham."

He denies using threatening behaviour during an incident in a pub when he was on duty in Germany.

"I was found guilty, lost my job, my pension, my career, everything, and then spent nine months in prison, part of it in civilian establishments."

"I know a bit about the workings of the Police and Criminal Evidence Act from my job as an RAF policeman, and the way I was convicted just would not be possible in civilian life."

Among the other cases are an RAF squadron leader dismissed with a conviction for shoplifting; an RAF corporal convicted of false accounting and dismissed; a signalman in the Army convicted of maliciously wounding another soldier in Cyprus and dismissed; and an RAF corporal convicted of forgery and dismissed. Two cases are pending against the Navy.

Blair vows to renationalise the railways

By ARTHUR LEATHLEY AND PHILIP BASSETT

TONY BLAIR pledged yesterday that Labour will return the railways to public ownership as he began a high-profile campaign to win support for his proposals to rewrite Clause Four of the party's constitution.

John Prescott, the deputy leader, will head a working party on rail ownership. "The aim is clear: to ensure a publicly owned, publicly accountable railway," Mr Prescott said yesterday.

Labour's move was calculated to defuse the internal dispute over the party's commitment to reversing privatisation. Mr Blair refused last week to explain what action a future Labour government would take to return the rail network to the public sector.

Brian Mawhinney, the Transport Secretary, seized on what he saw as confusion over Labour's rail policy, saying that the Opposition had not come clean.

"Just what is Labour's policy?" Dr Mawhinney asked. "There are two simple questions for Mr Blair: do you intend to renationalise the railways? Yes or no. And if you do intend to renationalise, how do you intend to fulfil

your commitment to reverse the decline in railway use?"

Mr Blair's refusal to comment on Labour's post-privatisation plans had sparked fears among some activists that the party would not keep its earlier promise to renationalise the railways. Roy Hattersley, the former Labour deputy leader, warned Mr Blair in an article in yesterday's *Observer* against "policy prevarication", saying that the party was in "urgent need of positive policies".

Yesterday it was announced that Mr Prescott, Gordon Brown, the Shadow Chancellor, and Michael Meacher, Shadow Transport Secretary, would consider the options for public ownership, including buying a majority stake in the privatised network.

Labour believes that, by making a firm commitment to return the railways to public ownership, it will undermine the Government's privatisation plans by deterring would-be franchisees from bidding for contracts. Mr Prescott said: "First and foremost, we are determined to stop this privatisation just as we did the Post Office, because we know what it means: fewer trains,

higher prices, and the kind of chaos being proposed on through-ticketing."

Although senior Labour figures denied that the move was part of a deal to ensure union backing for changes to Clause Four, leading Tories said that Mr Blair's action "proved that Labour remains in hock to the left". However, John Edmonds, leader of the GMB general union, insisted: "There's no deal. At least, if there's been dealing, I haven't been part of it."

The task of renationalisation would be made easier by the nature of the planned privatisation of the network. Unlike BT, gas, water and electricity, rail is far from dominant in its market, carrying only a small proportion of passenger and freight traffic. Its money-making potential would be less and it would attract fewer investors.

A Labour government might be faced with only a partial privatisation of the network, in which perhaps 51 per cent of Railtrack, the company that runs track and signalling, had been sold. This would considerably reduce the difficulties in finding the money to renationalise.

Yesterday's move comes as Mr Blair begins a high-profile campaign to win party backing for his proposals to rewrite Clause Four. He will start a nationwide tour this week to urge support.

The party is also sending 10-minute videos to more than 630 constituency branches, explaining the reasons behind the Clause Four proposals.



Evelyn Farrowby, the lay reader who opened the Tweseldown meeting with a short service, talks to a bookmaker

Historic horse race marred by death

By JOHN YOUNG

BRITAIN'S first Sunday horse-racing meeting with legal on-course betting was marred yesterday by the deaths of a bookmaker from a suspected heart attack and of a horse which fell at the first fence.

Leslie "Pip" Simms, 82, of Winners, Berks, a bookmaker for 60 years, collapsed at his pitch. A doctor was present, but Mr Simms was almost immediately pronounced dead.

A crowd of between 3,000 and 4,000 saw the fatal fall of Swordfield, a chestnut mare, in the first point-to-point race at Tweseldown, Hampshire. Not Quite White, a six-year-old grey gelding ridden by Tim McCarthy, 24, an amateur, went on to win.

The organisers, Garth and South Berkshire hunt committee, decided it would be "appropriate to start the proceedings with an act of worship". This was conducted by Evelyn Farrowby, a lay reader.

Racing, page 35

Potholers die in cave flood

Two potholers died and a third was missing last night after they were swept away by floodwater in the Marble Arch caves in Co Fermanagh. The victims were with a group of ten Dublin students. A team of local potholers found the bodies of the two men. The group had entered the caves from private land at 1 pm at a spot known as Cradle Hole. The caves, which were opened to the public in 1985, are a popular local attraction.

Police raid law firm's offices

Police raided the offices of one of the country's biggest criminal law firms, Robinson's, whose headquarters is in Gloucester, after allegations of irregularities over legal aid.

Opera founder dies

Sir Alexander Gibson, CBE, founder of Scottish Opera and its long-time artistic and musical director, has died in hospital after a heart attack. He was 68.

Prince suspends valet over photos

By ALAN HAMILTON

THE Prince of Wales's valet was suspended yesterday after his disclosure to a Sunday newspaper of alleged intimate details and photographs of his master's relationship with Camilla Parker Bowles.

Buckingham Palace confirmed that Ken Stronach, 50, had been suspended on full pay while senior officials and police conducted an investigation into the disclosure of the Prince's affair. Mr Stronach indicated to the newspaper that he was on the verge of leaving his job because he considered his employer a hypocrite.

Palace officials are particularly concerned at the security implications of a photograph, said to have been taken by Mr Stronach in the Prince's private quarters at Highgrove, showing a framed picture of Mrs Parker Bowles on his bedside table.

It shows Mrs Parker Bowles sitting on a garden bench outside the front door of Birkhall, a country house owned by the royal family on the edge of the Balmoral estate in Aberdeenshire. The newspaper claimed that a boy visible through a downstairs window was Prince William, but the Palace claimed yesterday that it was in fact Mrs Parker Bowles's son Tom, whose godfather is the Prince of Wales.

Mr Stronach was told of his suspension over the weekend at Birkhall, where he had travelled on Friday with the Prince. Mrs Parker Bowles was reported to have spent the weekend with her friend Patti Palmer-Tomkinson, a former skiing companion of the Prince, in Hampshire.

The former Royal Marine is the Prince's closest personal servant; he has worked for the Wales household for 16 years, and before that was a valet for Lord Mountbatten. Among

Security breach, page 3

Ulster Unionists may vote against Major

By NICHOLAS WATT, IRELAND CORRESPONDENT

ANGLO-IRISH talks on the future of Northern Ireland will resume this week after Ulster Unionists warned John Major that they may withdraw their support for the Government's peace initiative.

John Taylor, the Ulster Unionist MP for Strangford, said he would be prepared to trigger an election if the Government proposed All Ireland

bodies with executive powers in the forthcoming Anglo-Irish framework document.

David Trimble, UUP MP for Upper Bann, said his party would be on a "collision course" with the Government if cross-border bodies were introduced by Westminster rather than by a Northern Ireland assembly.

He said: "The Government knows very clearly that we will not have a situation where any body for co-operation draws its authority from somewhere other than a Northern Ireland legislature."

Mr Trimble said that Labour's policy was evolving towards a more welcome position.

Mayhew talks, page 2

William Rees-Mogg, page 18
Leading article, page 19



Prescott: to head group on railway ownership

Naked truth revealed about Ivy League photos

FROM JAMES BONE IN NEW YORK

THOUSANDS of members of America's Establishment learned with horror yesterday that they had been tricked into posing naked while at university for a now-discredited eugenics experiment, and that the nude photographs still exist.

Hillary Clinton and George Bush were among those photographed in a strange rite of passage known as "posture photos" when they entered the exclusive colleges in the Forties, Fifties and Sixties. Ivy League schools

such as Harvard and Yale and their women's counterparts, the "Seven Sisters", required new students to be photographed nude in front, side and rear poses for scientific purposes.

For decades, the bizarre ritual was kept secret by the Ivy League graduates; the possibilities for blackmail or ridicule were just too great.

Then, in 1992, Naomi Wolf, author of *The Beauty Myth*, made a passing reference in an article to a joke about the "posture photos" as her graduation ceremony at Yale in 1984.

The article prompted a letter to the

paper by George Hersey, a professor of art history at Yale, which set off a three-year hunt for any remaining pictures. He disclosed that they had been taken at the behest of two American eugenicists named E.A. Hooton and W.H. Sheldon, who directed Columbia University institute for physique studies.

Ron Rosenbaum, a journalist photographed when he arrived at Yale in the mid-1960s, began to investigate. Publishing his findings in yesterday's *New York Times* magazine, Mr Rosenbaum said he had tracked down

one of Mr Sheldon's former collaborators who had led him to a treasure trove of nude photographs.

Although some of the photographs locked in a branch of the Smithsonian museum in Washington have been burned since the late 1960s, the archive has 20,000 photographs of men, including 9,000 from Yale, and 7,000 of women.

Mrs Clinton could take some solace from the fact that by the time she arrived at Wellesley, it allowed women to be photographed only partially nude.

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Macmillan

Nolan starts scrutiny of public standards



Nolan: wants to hear range of strong views

UP TO 90 witnesses will be called to give evidence to Lord Nolan's public hearings into standards in public life that begin tomorrow.

Ivor Crewe, Professor of Politics at Essex University, Lord Blake, Conservative Party historian, and Roy Hattersley, MP, will be the first to give evidence in what promises to be the most penetrating inquiry into the ethics of holding public office since the Poulson corruption scandal in the 1970s. The hearings will take place between 10am and 1pm at Westminster Central Hall, London, every Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday for the next six weeks.

Since the inquiry was established by John Major in October, in response to the Commons "cash-for-questions" affair, the Nolan Committee has received more than 1,500 submissions from lawyers and lobbyists, MPs and trade unionists, local authorities and individuals.

The committee's first report is expected to be published in May. It will concentrate on MPs' financial interests and lobbying; the rules governing the conduct of ministers and civil servants; appointments to

■ Former Prime Ministers, historians and members of the public will take part in the inquiry into the ethics of holding office. Michael Dynes reports

public bodies such as National Health Service trusts, and the House of Lords.

Lord Nolan, a law lord, wants to hear a wide range of "strong views" on every aspect of the ethics of holding public office. "All views need to be rigorously tested. The public needs to be exposed to these conflicting views," the inquiry spokesman said. "Should MPs be able to advise only outside interest groups or organisations or should they be allowed to act as their advocates as well? Should MPs be free to have interests outside Parliament so long as they are registered or should the register of MPs' interests be tightened up? All of these propositions need to be tested," he added.

Dame Angela Rumbold, Conservative MP for Mitcham, and a vice-chairwoman of the Tory Party, will

give evidence on the second day of the inquiry. She resigned her position as board member of Decision Makers, a parliamentary lobbying organisation, when it was revealed that she had used her position to lobby for the Channel Tunnel rail link's intermediate station to be situated at Ebbsfleet in Essex. Although Dame Angela did not break any rules, she will be asked to explain why she felt it necessary to resign. Tony Newton, the Leader of the House of Commons, will be asked to give evidence on the conduct of MPs. He will be asked about the role of parliamentary lobbyists and the "cash-for-questions" affair, which led to the resignations of Conservative MPs Neil Hamilton and Tim Smith.

Lord Callaghan of Cardiff will also be asked to give evidence about public ethics in the period before the

1979 general election, when he was Prime Minister. Witnesses will be asked about the propriety of ministers and civil servants accepting gifts, possible conflicts of interest, and employment in the private sector after leaving public office. Sir Robin Butler, the Cabinet Secretary and Head of the Home Civil Service, will be asked to give evidence. But Baroness Thatcher and John Major will probably not be called.

The inquiry will pay particular attention to the issue of appointments to non-elected public office, including the big spending quangos, and the National Health Service trusts. The committee's decision to look at health reflects the growing criticism over the appointment of leading Conservatives to the boards of NHS trusts, and their level of remuneration. The committee will examine practice overseas, especially the recent initiatives to regulate abuse of public office in France, the United States, Ireland and Australia. But it will not address itself to local government, universities, and the honours system until after the first report has been completed.

Booby-trap packets sent to Waldegrave

Scotland Yard is investigating two packages booby-trapped with razor blades sent to William Waldegrave, the Agriculture Minister, at his London office. Threatening letters have also been sent to his Somerset farmhouse since the disclosure that calves from the farm may have been kept in European veal crates.

About 100 animal rights protesters staged a demonstration against the veal trade yesterday at the farm, watched by a dozen police officers. They dispersed once they learnt that Mr Waldegrave was away. There were no arrests.

133 share jackpot draw

The National Lottery jackpot of more than £16 million from Saturday's draw is to be shared between 133 winners who all guessed the six numbers correctly. Each will receive £122,510. There were more than two million winners overall from ticket sales of £70 million. Winning numbers, page 22

Crackdown on fumes

Local authorities will be given new powers to monitor airborne pollution and crack down on traffic fumes when the Government's long-awaited strategy for cutting air pollution is unveiled on Thursday. It will emphasise the role of planning in reducing car and lorry usage.

Airship pilot rescued

The pilot of an airship was rescued last night after he ditched in The Wash. The Virgin airship, which was advertising a make of car, went out of control after taking off from Cardington, Bedfordshire. The pilot jumped into the sea and was picked up by a pilot boat.

Clydebank hospital aid

The Abu Dhabi Investment Co. which is in talks with the receivers to take over HCI Hospital in Clydebank, can expect up to £4.4 million in regional aid, according to a leaked Scottish Office letter. The private hospital's collapse cost the public purse £30 million, critics claim.

Red Cross celebration

The British Red Cross launched its 125th birthday celebrations at Highbury in north London before Arsenal's Premiership match with Everton on Saturday. In a ceremony that was repeated at hundreds of football grounds across the country. Leading article, page 19

Opera founder dies

The conductor Sir Alexander Gibson, founder and former music director of the Scottish Opera Company, has died aged 68. Sir Alexander was also music director of the Royal Scottish National Orchestra from 1959 to 1984, then became its honorary president. Obituary, page 21

Drake salvage appeal

A group planning to raise the body of Sir Francis Drake 400 years after he was buried at sea off Panama and return it to Britain are hoping public opinion will help to overturn official disapproval. Sir David Nicholas, the former chairman of the group, says Drake should be in state and be properly honoured in his own country.

Cabinet Euro-sceptic hopes to bring Conservative rebels back on board

Portillo urges Major to curb Brussels power

By ARTHUR LEATHLEY AND JONATHAN FRYNN

MICHAEL PORTILLO urged the Prime Minister yesterday to mount a hardline campaign to curb the power of the European Union as part of a strategy to re-unite the Conservative Party.

Mr Portillo, the Employment Secretary and Cabinet standard-bearer of Tory Euro-sceptics, told BBC's *On the Record* that Mr Major's promises to resist EU constitutional changes and to block early moves towards a single currency had led to a "turning point" in the party's mood. As the Prime Minister stepped up his attempts to heal backbench rifts, Mr Portillo pressed him to bring Euro-rebels back into the party and to set out a positive vision in protecting British interests.

Mr Portillo said: "It would be a great mistake if we were made to look defensive. I think the Prime Minister will want to develop his thinking about the future of Europe over the next year."

Mr Major is to propose measures to reduce the powers of the European Commission and the European Court of Justice. He has asked Cabinet ministers to draw up changes which he will push for at this summer's meeting of EU leaders. The June meeting will lay the foundations for the EU



Portillo during yesterday's interview

intergovernmental conference in 1996.

Yesterday Mr Major invited senior backbenchers to Chequers, to emphasise that the party must rally to fight back against Labour.

Mr Major made clear last week that he would oppose plans for a single currency and would resist any moves which would impose constitutional change on Britain. Mr Portillo said yesterday: "He has adopted an agenda which fits in the majority of the party."

"I think the conditions for re-uniting the Conservative party are now in place. I am much more encouraged. The Prime Minister has also been

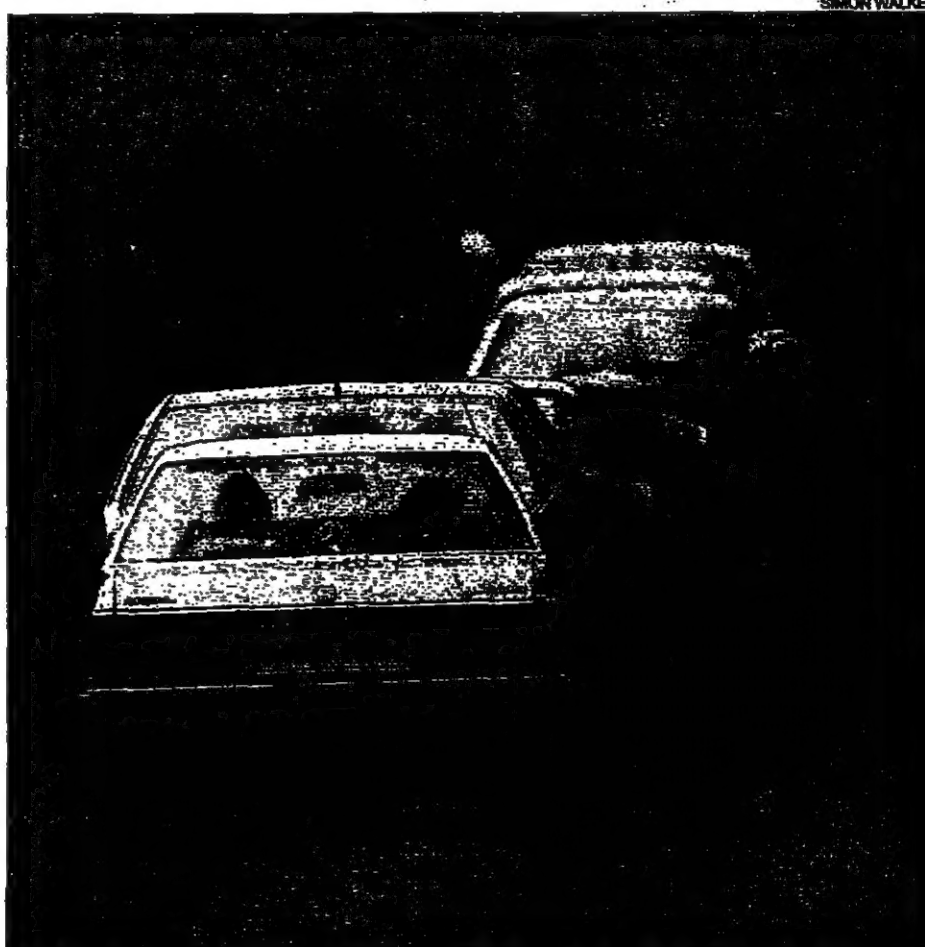
quite generous in his remarks about the rebels. There is now a window of opportunity for pulling the party back together and getting the rebels back on board."

Mr Major's attempts to bring the rebels back into the parliamentary party may be hampered this week if the MPs refuse to back the Government in a Commons vote on the fishing industry. Labour will press the nine "whipless" Tory Euro-rebels to support a motion criticising the Government's failure to prevent Spanish trawlers fishing in British and Irish waters.

The rebels threatened yesterday to abstain from Wednesday's vote in protest at Britain's inability to prevent EU law changes which they claim will jeopardise the livelihoods of UK fishermen.

They will decide tomorrow whether to team up against the Government with Tory MPs from fishing constituencies who were angered by the failure of William Waldegrave, the Agriculture Minister, to secure greater protection for British fishermen. Labour is also pressing Northern Ireland MPs, several of whom represent fishing communities, to back the motion.

Robert Hicks, Tory MP for Cornwall South East, said he was "very annoyed" with the Government over Mr



Sir Marcus Fox, chairman of the 1922 Committee, arrives at Chequers yesterday for the Prime Minister's lunch with senior Conservative backbenchers

Waldegrave's performance at the Brussels fishing council last month and would be "surprised" if he supported the Government in Wednesday's vote. John Wilkinson, MP for Ruislip & Northwood and one of the Euro-rebels, said that he was unlikely to back the Labour motion but regarded Mr Waldegrave's performance as "unutterably feeble".

Diary, page 18

Unionists threaten to break up Ulster talks

By NICHOLAS WATT IRELAND CORRESPONDENT

SIR Patrick Mayhew, the Northern Ireland Secretary, will this week resume talks with Dick Spring, the Irish Foreign Minister, on the forthcoming Anglo-Irish framework document amid warnings from the Ulster Unionists that they may withdraw support for the Government's peace initiative.

Leading Unionists said yesterday that they would be prepared to trigger an election if the Government proposed all-Ireland bodies with executive powers. The Government has insisted that the document will not propose joint authority, but John Taylor, the Unionist MP for Strangford, said he was wary of such a commitment.

He said: "In recent months the Government has said there will be no joint authority or joint sovereignty, and suddenly we hear rumours about cross-border bodies. If these turn out to be true the Government will have stabbed us in the back."

Sir Patrick tried to reassure Unionists last week that a settlement would not be imposed on the Province when he said that the Government was not compiling a "private blueprint for joint authority over Northern Ireland".

Another leading Unionist has said that the IRA ceasefire will not hold. Ken Maginnis, the Ulster Unionist MP for Fermanagh and South Tyrone, said that members of the IRA in East Tyrone and South Armagh wanted to resume their violent campaign.

Blair gets red card for attack on United

By JONATHAN FRYNN POLITICAL REPORTER

MANCHESTER UNITED accused Tony Blair, the Labour leader, of being out of touch with football fans yesterday after the Labour leader attacked last week's record £7 million transfer of Andy Cole from Newcastle United.

Mr Blair, one of whose sons is an ardent Manchester United fan, said he had been saddened by the purchase, which was symbolic of the ever increasing commercial exploitation of the game. Writing in a Sunday newspaper he said: "I worry that a game in which one individual is deemed to be worth £7 million and whose club must raise the money with ever more lucrative and exclusive TV deals, merchandising, and expensive seats, is a game which may lose touch with its roots."

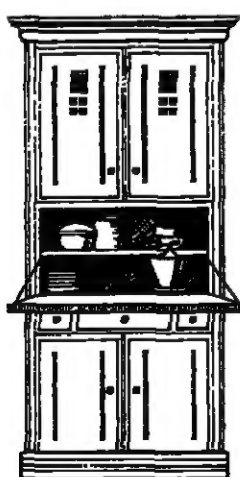
Later, in a speech at the Savoy hotel in London marking Sir Stanley Matthews' 80th birthday, the Labour leader, a Newcastle supporter, also criticised Manchester United for its frequent changes of official strip.

His criticisms received a frosty response from club officials. "Maybe he is upset that Cole's name has been in the news more than his over the past week," one Old Trafford executive said.

A spokesman for the club argued that it was effectively "spending for Britain" as the purchase of the striker would enable it to win trophies in European competitions.

Football, pages 23, 25-27

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BARCLAYS

Below-stairs royal revelations at a premium after divorce announcement

Trusted insider who was privy to Prince's most intimate secrets

By ALAN HAMILTON

ROYAL security has once again been breached, not by a malicious republican gunman or an unhinged intruder, but by a trusted insider. Modest wages and a ready market merge into a powerful temptation for palace servants to approach the tabloid press.

Ken Stronach was until yesterday the Prince of Wales's valet and therefore privy to his master's most intimate secrets.

In the present climate, his master's secrets are a valuable currency that can be traded profitably at the doors of the popular press. In the wake of last week's announcement that Camilla Parker Bowles and her husband are to divorce, any below-stairs revelations on royal romance were clearly at an absolute premium.

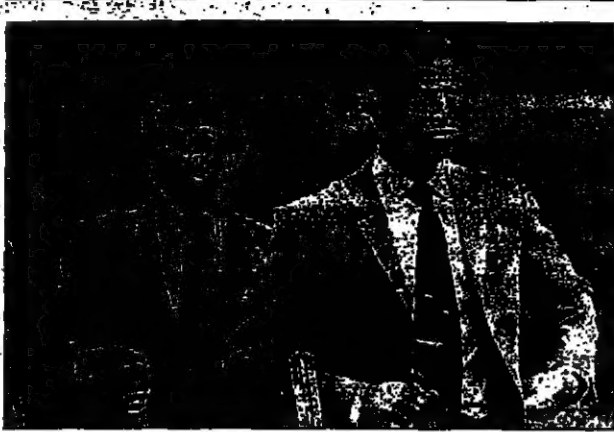
The 50-year-old Mr Stronach, a twice-married former Royal Marine, went to work for Earl Mountbatten shortly before the Prince of Wales's beloved great-uncle was blown up by IRA terrorists in 1979.

The Prince, then unmarried, inherited Mr Stronach, who worked for both the Prince and Princess during their earlier, happier married life together. His job entailed looking after the Prince's wardrobe and travel arrangements.

After 16 years' service in the Prince's household, he finally sold his story to the *News of the World*, claiming that his employer was a hypocrite and that he could no longer stand the strain of keeping royal secrets while his master felt free to go on television and confess adultery.

On the question of hypocrisy, Mr Stronach can hardly have been blameless. On Friday he travelled to Scotland with the Prince, presumably giving no hint to his employer that he had spent four hours in the *Essex* Hotel at Fife with *News of the World* reporters, telling of royal bed arrangements and handing over a photograph of the Prince's bedside table, on which stands a framed picture of Mrs Parker Bowles.

Mr Stronach, almost anticipating action against him, was reported to say he felt "let down" by the Prince after the broadcast of Jonathan Dimbleby's documentary last year.



Marion Crawford, top, and Stephen Barry, below, former royal employees who decided to publish.

"All through my time with him, we've all been told not to speak to anyone about anything. We've all kept his secrets and the strain made me very ill. Then he does a TV show and book telling the world what we spent years hiding. Everything he told us to do was a lie. I feel let down," he said.

The valet said that he felt so badly used by Prince Charles that he was willing to give up everything. "I'll be losing my home, my car, my job. My whole life," he said.

Yesterday morning, when the *News of the World* hit the nation's breakfast tables, Mr Stronach was said to have left the Balmoral estate: his employer was seen attending morning service at Cragie church looking distinctly disgruntled.

At the same time Buckingham Palace announced that Mr Stronach had been suspended on full pay pending an investigation. He cannot have gone to the newspaper without knowing that the disclosures would almost certainly cost him his job.

What can the Palace do about him? It can certainly dismiss him, as he has breached the clause in the contract of employment that all Royal Household staff now have to sign, which forbids them ever to discuss private matters they have gleaned while working for the Royal Family.

Beyond that, criminal prosecution seems unlikely, although police are concerned at the security implications of his

everything. "I'll be losing my home, my car, my job. My whole life," he said.

Yesterday morning, when the *News of the World* hit the nation's breakfast tables, Mr Stronach was said to have left the Balmoral estate: his employer was seen attending morning service at Cragie church looking distinctly disgruntled.

At the same time Buckingham Palace announced that Mr Stronach had been suspended on full pay pending an investigation. He cannot have gone to the newspaper without knowing that the disclosures would almost certainly cost him his job.

What can the Palace do about him? It can certainly dismiss him, as he has breached the clause in the contract of employment that all Royal Household staff now have to sign, which forbids them ever to discuss private matters they have gleaned while working for the Royal Family.

Beyond that, criminal prosecution seems unlikely, although police are concerned at the security implications of his

being able to take a photograph of the Prince's private quarters and have it published in the largest-selling newspaper in Britain.

Had the Palace had prior knowledge of the disclosures, it might well have sought an injunction preventing publication, claiming the defence of security.

There may yet be an approach to the Press Complaints Commission, on the ground of intrusion of privacy, a sensitive topic on which the newspaper industry, faced with the threat of legislation, has argued for self-policing.

Mr Stronach is the latest in a long line of royal servants who have chosen to spill the beans. The trend was begun by Marion Crawford, a former nanny to the princesses Elizabeth and Margaret, who published *The Little Princesses*, a book so anodyne and syrupy that it made Lord Byron seem raucous. She was nevertheless cast into outer darkness by her former employers, and died in poverty and disgrace.

Stephen Barry, another former valet who served the Prince in his later bachelor years, published a book of disclosures after he had left royal employment — made redundant, he claimed, by the arrival of the Princess of Wales. Barry's book appeared in the United States but a palace injunction has prevented it ever being published here. Barry subsequently died of an AIDS-related illness.

Another royal servant achieved notoriety when she took private letters from the Princess Royal's bedside and gave the outside world the first confirmation of the Princess's relationship with Commander Timothy Laurence, to whom she is now married.

The most usual form of attack by Buckingham Palace in the case of leaks and disclosures is to claim breach of copyright, as when newspapers published a group family photograph showing the Duchess of York's two young children with the Queen and Duke of Edinburgh, and when *The Sun* published in advance the text of the Queen's Christmas broadcast.

Both were settled out of court, with substantial donations being given to charity.

Valet suspended, page 1



Ken Stronach with the Prince of Wales at a polo match in Windsor in 1987. Mr Stronach claimed he could no longer stand the strain of keeping royal secrets

Royal valet suspended

Continued from page 1

seven pages of below-stairs disclosure. Mr Stronach alleged a number of secret meetings between the prince and Mrs Parker Bowles at Highgrove, some of them while the Princess of Wales was in residence.

He claimed to have washed grass stains from the prince's pyjamas after illicit meetings in the undergrowth. Mr Stronach told the *News of the World* that he had felt let down by the prince's confession of adultery in a television

documentary in June, after he and other staff had been sworn to secrecy.

Mr Stronach admitted to the newspaper that the disclosures would almost certainly cost him his £12,000 a year job, and the Vauxhall Omega car that went with it.

In common with other royal employees, Mr Stronach signed an employment contract containing a clause forbidding him to reveal any details of the personal lives of those he worked for. Palace officials are torn between

anger and despair at the latest disclosures, which can only undermine their best efforts to preserve the prince's public image.

Photographs have also caused trouble for the Princess of Wales. Next month the High Court will hear her breach-of-contract case against Mirror Group Newspapers and Bryce Taylor, owner of the health club she regularly attends, after the publication in the *Sunday Mirror* of photographs of her exercising in the gym.

Former rugby star fails breath test after crash

By LIN JENKINS

WADE DOOLEY, the former England rugby union international and policeman, was arrested by officers from his own force after a crash in which a 14-year-old girl was seriously injured.

PC Dooley, 36, was driving home to Weston, Lancashire, after a rugby match when his car hit the girl in nearby Kirkham just after 10pm on Saturday. He failed a breath test.

PC Dooley, who retired from international rugby last year as England's most capped lock forward, was returning from Birmingham in his Land Rover Discovery after a league match with his club, Preston Grasshoppers, when the accident occurred. Colleagues said yesterday that

he was "distracted and shatter" after the incident.

"After all, he did not know whether the girl was dead or alive," one said. They said he had told investigating officers that the girl appeared to dash across the road into the path of his vehicle.

The girl, who suffered abdominal injuries, was said to be "stable" in Royal Preston Hospital yesterday.

A spokesman for the Lancashire force, where PC Dooley works as a community policeman in Blackpool, said: "The matter was being dealt with under the Road Traffic Offenders Act. He said PC Dooley had not been charged or suspended. A file will be sent to the Crown Prosecution Service when a full investigation

into the accident has been completed.

PC Dooley, who is 6ft 5in, earned the nickname "Blackpool Tower" during his international career. He was capped 55 times by England and helped the team to win consecutive grand slams. He has continued to play for his force side since his retirement from the national team and was persuaded only a fortnight ago to rejoin the Preston team to help with their promotion battle.

Two years ago PC Dooley, who is married to a police woman and has two children, was a passenger in a minibus that crashed on a police trip to the Lake District. The driver was convicted of drink-driving.

War-game tanks hit an obstacle

By A STAFF REPORTER

LORD Harlech has angered villagers with a plan to allow part of his estate in Shropshire to be used as a mock battle-ground for business executives playing war games in SS-400 Chieftain tanks.

The scheme, which is currently before Oswestry Borough Council planning committee, has been proposed by two Manchester-based businessmen who want to rent parts of the 110-acre land surrounding the 18th-century Broghlyn Hall, which is listed Grade II.

Lord Harlech, who is anxious to raise revenue to maintain the hall and its workforce, is backing the proposal to use six Chieftain tanks, one eight-ton Scorpion and half-a-dozen smaller vehicles for the five-day residential courses.

But the plans have met with a barrage of opposition from

locals. Lawrence Garner, chairman of the Oswestry and District Civic Society, said the idea was "as destructive as it is ridiculous".

He said: "A couple of Manchester promoters are proposing to rent a large part of the land from Lord Harlech to hold these War Games breaks. They want to convert a set of farm buildings into a training centre and the tank routes will fan out from there into the woodland and across most of the park."

The armoured tracks will run mainly out across agricultural pasture, but two of the routes come within 50 yards of the hall itself. It is a crying shame because the area is a very attractive piece of landscaped parkland and these tanks will just gouge tracks all over it.

"Not only is there a real danger to the public as three of



Harlech: anxious for cash to run estate

the place. Once these crazy tanks start charging across their back garden it is hardly likely that anybody will want to move in."

Imelda Havers, 35, leader of the local residents' opposition group, said: "Broghlyn Hall is a very special place and is in the hearts of the Oswestry locals. Feelings are running very strong. We have called on the Department of the Environment and English Heritage and stop this plan before it gains any momentum."

Lord Harlech was unavailable for comment yesterday. Lady Harlech said: "We are far too busy to talk to the Press."

Environmentalists have said that a vulnerable stock of lime and beech trees could be wiped out if the tanks roll across the estate.

A spokesman for Oswestry Borough Council said councillors would consider the application in the next six weeks.

Lawyers' offices raided in fraud inquiry

By LIN JENKINS

A SERIES of police raids was carried out yesterday as part of a fraud investigation into one of the country's biggest criminal law firms. The operation was thought to follow allegations of legal aid irregularities.

Files and papers were seized from the headquarters of Robinsons in Gloucester. Other premises were also raided by officers in Gloucestershire, Avon and Somerset and Wiltshire.

The home of a senior partner, Timothy Robinson, at Badgeworth near Cheltenham, was searched during the operation conducted by the Serious Fraud Office. Mr Robinson said: "At 8 o'clock this morning, police and officials of the SFO executed warrants to search for and seize documents from the offices of my firm and some of its staff."

"As senior partner, I can say we are co-operating fully. I support efforts being made by the authorities to prevent abuse of the Legal Aid Fund. It is possible the investigation has arisen as a result of malicious allegations made by a former employee who was dismissed by this firm."

"While this has all the hallmarks of a fishing expedition, we have total confidence that the firm will be given a clean bill of health. We are one of the few firms in the country which takes in-house precautions to prevent fraud on the authorities from occurring."

Mr Robinson said that a Liverpool law practice had recently received similar attention. He said that he had not yet been questioned and that the police had confined themselves to searching for documents. Police had also called on the homes of some, but not all of his three partners. "There seems to be no rhyme nor reason to it," he said.

The Serious Fraud Office "said in a statement: 'Officers from the Gloucestershire, Avon and Somerset and Wiltshire forces in conjunction with the Serious Fraud Office executed warrants to search a number of office and residential premises in connection with an ongoing investigation into alleged fraud. The investigation is continuing.'

Legal executives from Mr Robinson's firm support solicitors in magistrates courts, instruct barristers at the Crown Court and are on round-the-clock call to attend police stations when clients are arrested."

Almost 800 solicitors' firms in England and Wales are having their books inspected after record levels of alleged fraud were uncovered. Estimates put the amount overcharged to the Legal Aid Fund at £5 million. The investigation is being conducted by the Serious Fraud Office, the Legal Aid Board and the Solicitors Complaints Bureau.

The bureau has taken over the operation of four legal firms following inquiries. One in seven firms is to be examined by their team of accountants in an effort to stamp out malpractice and breaches of account rules.

Much of the alleged fraud concerns non-criminal work under the legal aid "green form" scheme where solicitors give advice in areas such as welfare law, housing, immigration and employment. As many as 175 solicitors are expected to end up before the solicitors' disciplinary tribunal as the profession faces unprecedented levels of supervision and scrutiny.

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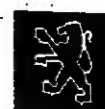
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With computers and fax machines, newcomers are helping to reverse decline on the Celtic fringe

Hi-tech aids turn island dream into economic reality

THERE is a powerful romance about islands seen from afar. They shimmer on horizons and sing their siren song of a life cleansed of crowds, crime, and the rat race. They promise simplicity and fulfilment.

The reality can be very different. Jobs may be few, the earth unyielding, the sea treacherous, and the indigenous population wary of incomers who threaten the community's balance.

For decades, the Western Isles of Scotland have suffered depopulation and decline, most graphically demonstrated in 1990 when the remaining population of 30 on St Kilda, the remotest British isle of all, petitioned the Government to be evacuated to the mainland when disease and a lack of job-bodily men rendered their existence untenable. In more recent times the young of the Hebrides have sailed to the mainland for further education; many have never returned.

Since the Highland clearances in Scotland and the potato famines in Ireland, the far Celtic fringes of the British Isles have been forced to scratch a barely sustainable living from unproductive crofts; latterly, only government subsidy has made possible their way of life.

Earlier well-meaning attempts to revitalise the Western Isles have foundered on the rock of islanders' resistance to mainland ways. Between the wars, Lord Leverhulme built the Lewismen a fine fishing harbour and called it Leverburgh; he invited them to join him in large-scale commercial fishing, and created Mac Fisheries to sell the harvest of The Minch. But the Lewismen sent him packing; they were their own men, and would have none of

■ An electronic superhighway has replaced the age-old Road to the Isles for families seeking to leave behind city stress. Alan Hamilton and Ian Murray write

REFUGEES FROM THE RAT RACE



fish factories or set working hours.

But now, after so many sad years of decline, the population of the Western Isles is stabilising, the emigrants replaced by incomers from the British mainland, few of whom are the drop-outs who once came to escape life's responsibilities on the mainland, contributing little to island life.

The new immigrants are energetic and economically active, and they come prepared for the endless howling gales and bare six hours of daylight in winter. They have learnt the vital lesson known to generations of islanders, that the crofter must do more than tend his stony, handkerchief-sized fields to sustain a living. Traditionally, the crofter has supplemented his income with fishing or weaving.

Now there is another option drawing the English to the Hebrides, and to a lesser extent the far west of Ireland: information technology. The

croft now has a computer. An electronic superhighway has replaced the Road to the Isles. The islands are the first area in Britain to appoint their own information technology officer, and their very remoteness has provided the incentive to pioneer new communications techniques. Isolated "telly-cottages" are linked to business centres worldwide. Translators, copywriters and even temporary secretaries can work for multinational companies throughout the world to supplement the inadequate income of the crofter or fish farmer.

There are other benefits. The Isle of Lewis is creating one of the world's first computer universities, plugged into the worldwide Internet system and about to bring the most modern higher education to some of the remotest communities in Europe. Crofts in the last century were deliberately made too small to provide a living for their tenants, who were thereby forced to work for the landlords to pad out their incomes. Now the computer terminal is an alternative employer, and the crofts are viable again.

Life can still be difficult, however, and the incomers who do best are those who realise from the outset that to survive, prosper and above all to fit in with the local community, you need several strings to your bow. With sound economic foundations, romance once again has a chance.



Peter Mantle, a former financial journalist from London, helped by his five-year-old daughter Camilla, rows across Finlough to the hotel on which he spent more than £1 million after moving to the west coast of Ireland nine years ago. He is currently involved in spearheading a campaign to save the sea trout industry

of Co Mayo, on which his livelihood largely depends. Mr Mantle, 42, believes the fish have been killed off by parasites linked to intensive salmon farming. The failure of the sea trout industry almost ruined the hotelier, whose guests at Delphi Lodge in the Doolough Valley can fish six miles of lakes and rivers.

"When the sea trout collapsed in 1990 we were suddenly left with nothing," His difficulties have done nothing to diminish his love for the area, however. "We go back to England decreasingly now." He and his wife Jane have settled in so well that they now regard Camilla, who has recently started at school, as Irish.

Strangers overcome sound of silence

By NICHOLAS WATT

WHEN Gaye Fox left North Yorkshire for Co Donegal in 1988, she loathed life in Ireland. She missed her family and felt awkward under the silent gaze of locals when she walked into the pub near her cottage in the hamlet of Ballynare, near Rathmellon.

But after a few years she and her husband Adam, who runs a fish farm, settled in. They know they will always be regarded as "blow-ins", but conversation no longer dies when they go for a drink. Mrs Fox, who works in a leather shop in Letterkenny, has been fully converted to Ireland's slower pace of life. She considers Co Donegal an ideal place for bringing up their three children. "The education system is of a very high standard," she says. "My two older girls, who are 16 and 17, have settled in well. It is much safer here, and if they come back at 3am I know they'll be all right."

Their neighbours, Ian and Peggy Smith, moved to Co Donegal from Wales in 1973, and have enjoyed every moment. Mr Smith, 75, attributes their successful move to observing important advice they were given when they arrived. He says: "We were told to keep quiet, not to throw our weight around and to pay all our bills on time."

Making a virtue of remoteness

By IAN MURRAY

IN THE Victorian fastness of Lewis Castle on the outskirts of Stornoway, Mick Roebuck is developing one of the world's first computer campuses.

As principal of the college there for the past three years, he has been building a university along the electronic superhighway, which will bring the most modern higher education to some of the remotest communities in Europe.

Stornoway is home to one of thirteen colleges of the embryonic University of the Highlands and Islands. Just before Christmas it became one of the first to be linked to Internet and before long it will be sending degree courses to "telet cottages" on the outer fringes of the Western Isles.

The development is critical in stopping the depopulation of the islands, which send a higher proportion of school-leavers to university than almost anywhere else in Britain. After completing a course on

the mainland few return, which means the brightest and best of each generation are missing.

"Some will still want to go off to the mainland," Mr Roebuck, from Huddersfield said, "but with the cut in grants a lot of students just won't be able to afford it."

"We will not just be selling them to islanders but to people who want to follow environmental courses in a place where they can study and experience a remote lifestyle."

The courses available will make a virtue out of remoteness. Students of environmental subjects will be able to link up with their tutors on an interactive multimedia screen in their telet cottage or in small learning centres such as the one being set up on Barra. They will then be able to put into practice techniques they have learnt in a way that would be impossible in a city campus.

Survivor's guide to Hebrides

By IAN MURRAY

FOR Chris Corden, the decision to swap a home in Staines, west London, for life in the Hebrides was easy. "When you see the island looming up in front you say: 'That's home.' It really gets under your skin. But you have got to join in. You can't sit here in isolation or you won't last six months."

He arrived in Lewis seven years ago to take over a derelict fish factory. "My wife and children are very happy here. The schooling is good because the classes are smaller. The children are welcome in every home in the village and we never have to worry about them even if we don't know where they are. We are part of a real community."

He feels he has achieved more at his factory, which makes fish and prawns, oil, than he ever could have done in his work in Staines. This year it will double in size.



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Happy ending to adventure

WHEN Sharon and Pete Duce paid £600 for a croft at Quidnish on Harris 23 years ago, their friends in Bocking-hamshire thought they were mad. There was no electricity or telephone, and the nearest road was a mile away. Mr Duce had been told he ought to find a job in Corby or Invergorrdon if he wanted a career as a metallurgist.

Mrs Duce, 42, brought up their daughters; Mr Duce, 47, worked on fishing boats and a mobile shop, sold animal feed and fed salmon. He has built a road over the moor. There are no regrets.



Peter and Sharon Duce, who bought a croft on Harris

Weavers bank on pedal power

HARRIS TWEED production is about to be revolutionised by an English loom (Ian Murray writes). The cottage industry, which has seen its order book halved in the past decade, is fighting back using bicycle technology from Washington, Tyne and Wear.

A trial run by nine prototype looms was successfully completed before Christmas. This year the replacement begins of the 450 treadle-powered looms sprinkled in remote cottages throughout the islands of Harris and Lewis.

John Griffiths, who de-

signed the new loom, had to ensure that any breaks with tradition would not compromise Harris Tweed's claim to be made on a hand loom. So he replaced the laborious treadle with a less exhausting bicycle pedal. The new loom also produces cloth twice the width of the old ones, which at 2ft 6in was too narrow for the modern clothing industry and its computerised cutters.

Complicated negotiations over how much weavers will be paid for cloth produced on the new looms are being led by Ken Bartolomey, 51, who left

his job as a banker in London 12 years ago to settle on the croft belonging to the family of his wife Katie near Tarbert on Harris. The new looms are expected to produce 30 per cent more cloth in a working day and, as secretary of the weavers' association, he has to negotiate a pay rate that takes this into account without making the cost prohibitive.

The new looms cost £13,000 each and, although weavers are being given a 70 per cent grant, they will have to find about £4,000 each for the new equipment.

السنة ١٤١٥

Human rights lawyer adds to club resignations over 'absurd, antediluvian' policy

Lord Lester quits Garrick in protest at bar on women

By FRANCES GIBB, LEGAL CORRESPONDENT

ONE of the most eminent members of the legal profession, Lord Lester of Herne Hill, QC, has resigned from the Garrick Club in protest over its refusal to admit women.

Lord Lester, a Liberal Democrat who has been a member of the club since the late 1960s, decided in the summer to leave the club with effect from last month after, he says, "it became clear that members of the Garrick are implacably hostile to female membership". He told *The Times*: "It is absurd, unjust and antediluvian that a social club for distinguished writers, actors and lawyers should be closed to such people as Baroness [P.D.] James, Dame Joan Plowright and Dame Elizabeth Butler-Sloss."

The resignation of Lord Lester, the country's leading lawyer in the field of human rights and equality, coincides with a number of resignations from clubs that are regarded as bastions of male chauvinism. Last week the eminent psephologist David Butler, fellow of Nuffield College, Oxford, resigned from the Oxford and Cambridge University Club after 43 years in protest

at its exclusion of women from facilities such as the library. Yesterday, it was also reported that more than 50 members have resigned this month from the Carlton Club, where women and non-Conservative voters are barred from joining. In many cases the resignations are over subscription rates (full membership is £625 a year, with a lower rate for Conservative MPs) rather than entrance policy.

Earlier this year, Peter Carter-Ruck, the celebrated libel lawyer, also resigned from the club. The Oxford and Cambridge could be faced with legal challenge after college principals failed to force it to grant full membership to women.

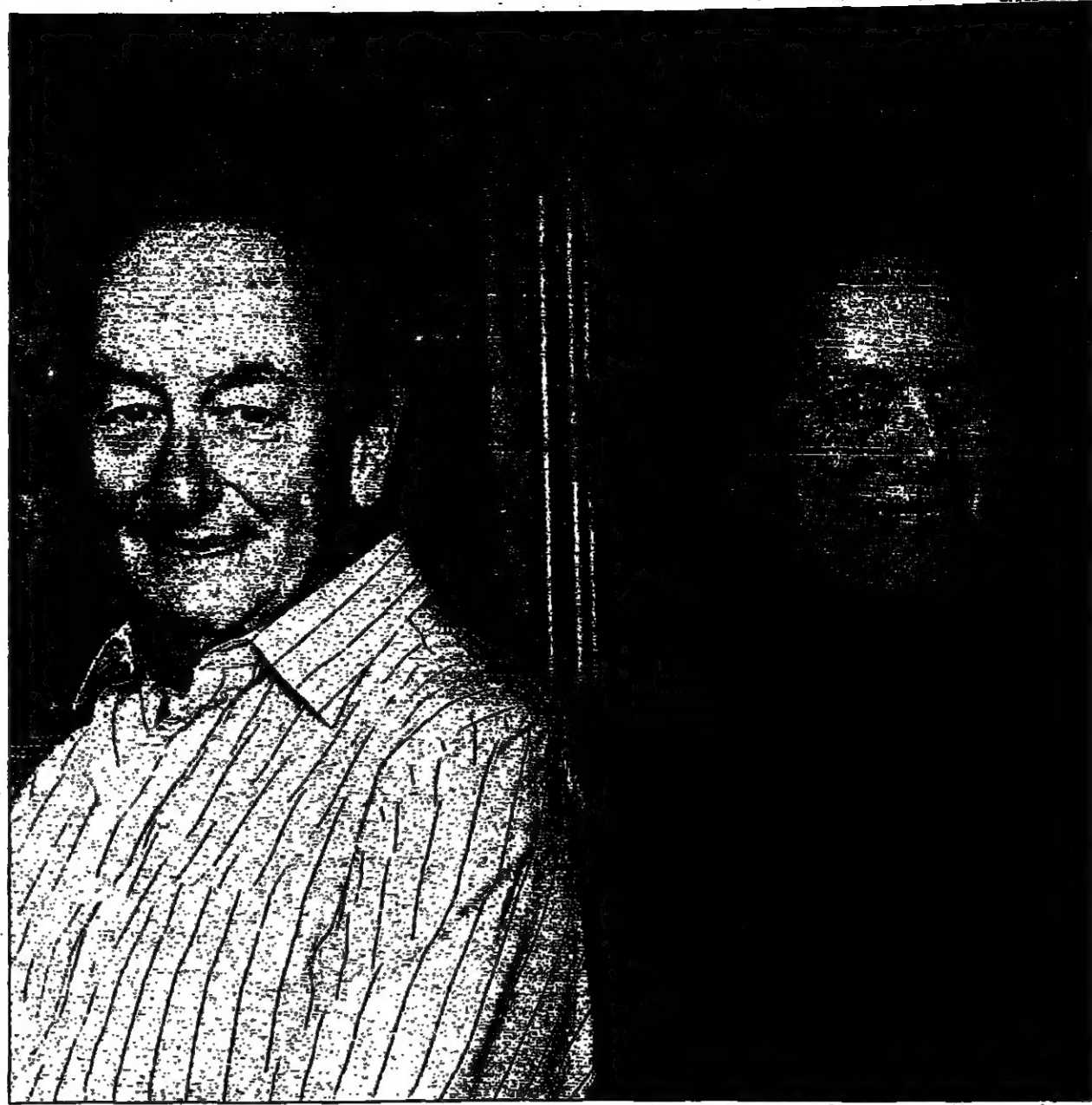
Lord Lester, 58, was one of the prime movers behind a failed challenge to the Garrick's bar on women in 1992. "I have only been there once since. I didn't feel happy being there," he said, adding that the response from the club to his letter of resignation was "grossly rude. There was no mention of regret that a member of long-standing should be leaving; I was just

told that I could use the facilities until December. It was completely graceless."

Lady Lester, who would often accompany her husband to the club in the evenings, where women may dine with male club members in the coffee room and use other rooms except for the bar and study, said: "It's a splendid institution but I feel it should be brought into the 20th century. That someone like, for example, my old college friend, Mrs Justice Arden [a High Court judge in the Chancery division] should not be allowed in is simply crazy."

Lord Lester drafted the resolution in 1992 to admit women at the Garrick but was unavoidably out of the country at the time of the crucial vote which was lost by four to one after opponents turned out in droves. The chief opposition, he said, comes not from the judges and lawyers or writers at the club — nearly all of whom were in favour of admitting women — but from the "misogynists among actors and businessmen".

Lord Lester said he had decided to go public about his resignation after the news about David Butler.



Lord and Lady Lester at home in Herne Hill, south London. He tried to end the Garrick's bar on women in 1992

Donated blood 'not checked for virus'

Thousands of infected blood donations have been given to patients despite the ready availability of a test for the Hepatitis C virus, according to *Panorama* on BBC1 tonight. The Blood Transfusion Service failed to check for the virus between 1989 and 1991, the programme claims.

Tory club raid

Eleven people were being held in police cells last night after an armed robbery at a Conservative club in Bournemouth. Police said that three men were arrested at the scene by police marksmen.

Russian ride

The British-registered charity Friends of Russian Children is seeking cyclists for a nine-day 450-mile ride between St Petersburg and Moscow in June. Money raised will go towards burns treatment.

Water work

The National Rivers Authority is to study riverbed "low life" to assess water quality in the South West. Certain species survive only in the cleanest water and the study will be compared with one in 1990.

Concrete answer

William Hillier, 59, who built his own house at Godshill Ridge in the New Forest, has been told by planners to fill the sitting-room with concrete because he did not have permission for the extra room.

Youth drowns

Abner Turner, 17, drowned when he fell into the River Irwell after climbing a parapet on his way home with friends after drinking in Manchester city centre on Saturday night, police said yesterday.

Comedy honour

Eric Morecambe, the comedian who died in 1984, is to be honoured with a blue plaque on the house where he once lived in north London to coincide with what would have been his 69th birthday in May.

Museum saves 1777 calculator that inspired computer pioneer

By NIGEL HAWKES, SCIENCE EDITOR



Earl of Stanhope invented an early adding machine

THREE valuable scientific instruments sold to Bonn University by the trustees of Chevening, the Foreign Secretary's country house, have been saved for the nation.

The National Heritage Memorial Fund and the Science Museum have raised the £340,000 needed to keep the instruments in the country after their export was stopped three months ago by the reviewing committee on the export of works of art.

The time period allowed for a rescue bid for the instruments, originally given to the nation by Lord Stanhope, whose family

owned Chevening, runs out tomorrow. The three items, described by the Science Museum as "very important", are a 17th-century calculating tool called a rotula, a calculator invented by the third Lord Stanhope in 1777 and materials related to Stanhope's Demonstrator, a device for solving logical problems. They were sold through Sotheby's by private treaty to an unnamed buyer believed to be a German collector acting on behalf of Bonn University. He bid £340,537.

Of the three items, the Stanhope Calculator is the most important, reckoned to be worth £247,000 on its own. But since the items were sold as a single lot, the Science

Museum must buy them all. Some specialists in the field are angry about the way the original sale was conducted. "Morally the idea of the nation having to buy things already given to it is repugnant," one said. "The original sale was carried out by the trustees under a veil of secrecy."

Sotheby's denies any impropriety. A spokesman said it advised a sale by private treaty, and contacted all likely bidders, including the national museums. This was the best way to obtain a top price on behalf of the trustees. "Nothing underhand was done," he added.

Captain David Husband, agent for the Chevening Estate, said that the trustees took legal advice.

"There was no question of concealing the sale. The trustees were very reluctant to sell, but they had to bite the bullet. They have got to find extra funds to keep Chevening going."

Captain Husband's only regret is that, had the instruments gone to Bonn, the university had promised to make a replica for Chevening. Whether the Science Museum will prove so accommodating remains to be seen. He said that the trust had retained some important scientific materials, and had no plans to sell any more.

Chevening in Kent was the home of the Stanhope family until it was given to the nation in 1967. The trust established by Parliament to

run the house has discretion to do whatever it sees fit. In May 1993 it held a sale of furniture, china and silver and raised more than £580,000.

The prize item of the three now to go to the Science Museum, Stanhope's Calculator, may have inspired a later computer pioneer, Charles Babbage.

Jane West of the Science Museum said that it was the first machine able to "carry" tens to the next column when doing calculations. The museum already had a prototype, but the version from Chevening appears to be a production model, made to Stanhope's design by James Bullock, a clockmaker.

Code restricts adverts aimed at children

By ALEXANDRA FREAN, MEDIA CORRESPONDENT

THE advertising industry is to be required to take a more socially responsible stance in advertisements aimed at children. New rules published today will include a ban on alcohol advertisements in publications or on poster sites where more than 25 per cent of the potential audience is aged under 18.

From next month campaigns for slimming products directed at children or adolescents will be banned, as will any suggestion that it is desirable to be underweight. Caroline Crawford, a spokeswoman for the Advertising Standards Authority, which regulates all print and non-broadcast advertisements, said the new rules on slimming products had been prompted by concerns about the number of young people who might develop eating disorders partly as a result of perceived media pressure.

Crash diets may not be promoted unless it is made clear that they are to be used under direct medical supervision. Ms Crawford said that the revised code was designed to reflect the public's growing awareness of social problems and health and environmental issues. "The old requirements for advertisements to be legal, decent, honest and truthful remain, but the industry itself now feels that there is a need to spell out more clearly some of its responsibilities, especially towards the more vulnerable members of society."

To protect children's health the code, which has not been revised since 1988, stipulates that advertisements should not encourage children to eat or drink just before bedtime or to replace main meals with snack foods. Promotions or competitions aimed at children should not require excessive purchases before a child can take part, particularly when the prizes or incentives on offer are items that might cause conflict between parents and children such as animals, bicycles or holidays.

From February 1, when the new code comes into practice, advertisements for costly and complex goods or services for children will require advertisers to make clear that parental permission is required before a purchase is made. The new code is a recognition of the growing awareness among consumers of the power of advertising and their increasingly sophisticated attitude towards it, and contains stiffer guidelines and rules in a wide range of product areas. One introduces a ban on health professionals and celebrities endorsing medicines. "We do not want to glamourise medicines to the extent that people end up using them because they are fashionable and not because they need them," Ms Crawford said.

The revised code does, however, permit advertisers to make stronger claims than previously allowed for anti-wrinkle cream, if its beneficial effects can be proved. "Before, we did not accept that there were things that could change the appearance of your skin, but now there is an acceptance that some products can make a difference," Ms Crawford said.

Claims such as "environmentally friendly" will no longer be acceptable without convincing proof that products cause no environmental damage. Advertisements for alcohol will have to include a prominent warning on the dangers of drinking and driving. Car manufacturers will no longer be able to make claims for speed or acceleration the predominant message of their advertisements. Advertisers will also be urged to consider public sensitivities before using controversial material and should take care to avoid causing offence on the grounds of race, religion, sex or disability.

The new code has been approved, and in some cases instigated, by all the leading advertising trade bodies, including the Advertising Association and the Institute of Practitioners in Advertising.

The Private Life of Plants an illustrated lecture by Sir David Attenborough

READERS of *The Times* are invited to attend an illustrated lecture by Sir David Attenborough on "The Private Life of Plants", organised in conjunction with Dillons the Bookstore, on Wednesday, January 25, at the Institute of Education, 20 Bedford Way, London WC1, at 7.30pm.

Sir David is Britain's best-known biologist. His ground-breaking television programmes and books on wildlife have ensured our introduction to the lives of almost every animal in existence. Now, in his new BBC series, *The Private Life of Plants*, he turns his attention to flora and fauna, revealing in spectacular fashion that much like animals, plants have to mate, compete with enemies, find food and get along with their neighbours. Sir David's illustrated talk will be based on the BBC book of the series.

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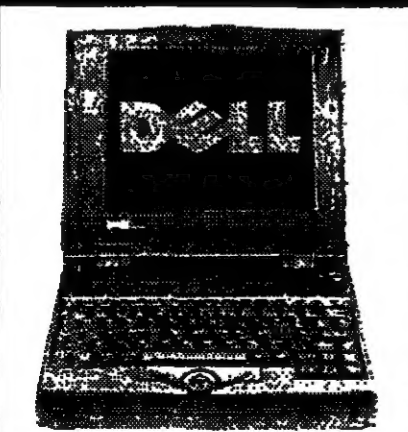
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High grades cast doubt on quality of revised A levels

By BEN PRESTON, EDUCATION CORRESPONDENT

CANDIDATES taking controversial new A levels in which they sit regular examinations during their two-year course achieve better results than those on traditional courses, an unpublished report shows.

The first authoritative research into modular A levels, which are fast gaining popularity in schools and colleges, shows that pupils gain at least one extra grade. The finding by the University of Newcastle will fuel concerns that A-level standards, regarded by ministers as the bench-

mark of quality in education, are being jeopardised by the rapid and piecemeal introduction of an "easier" alternative.

In traditional A levels, grades are decided by final examinations. But in modular courses these are worth only 30 per cent. Instead the syllabus is divided into self-contained units roughly equivalent to a term's work. Pupils can choose to be formally examined after completing each unit rather than waiting until the end of two years' study. If a pupil is

unhappy with his mark for a particular unit he can retake the examination as often as he chooses.

The structure aims to boost motivation, particularly in the first year of A-level study. However, the findings of a report commissioned by the Government's examination watchdog, the School Curriculum and Assessment Authority, have raised questions about the leniency of modular courses.

Analysis by Newcastle researchers of more than 7,000 A-level mathematics candidates at almost 900 state and independent schools, who gained similar GCSE results, found the average candidate on a modular course gained a grade C, compared with a D for those on a traditional course. Barely 4 per cent of modular candidates failed, compared with 22 per cent of the rest.

One quarter of those on modular courses gained a grade A, compared with 19 per cent of those on traditional courses. Some 21 per cent of modular candidates got a B, 19 per cent a C and 18 per cent a D, compared with 15 per cent a B, 15 per cent a C and 16 per cent a D for traditional courses.

Professor Carol Fitz-Gibbon, director of the Curriculum, Evaluation and Management Centre at Newcastle, which produced the report, refused to comment in advance of publication. But previous work by the centre suggested that the under-representation of lower grades in modular courses was because candidates chose to improve their marks by re-sitting examinations before registering their final grades. Similarly, the low failure rate was to be expected as candidates would not bother to record officially that they had failed.

However, it is understood that researchers do not believe that the higher motivation of modular candidates and their willingness to re-sit examinations can explain such a large discrepancy.

Education, pages 37, 38

Schools short of qualified staff

By JOHN O'LEARY, EDUCATION EDITOR

ALMOST half the teachers in some subjects have no qualifications in that area beyond A level, according to a survey of English secondary schools.

The figures, released to a Labour MP, confirm a trend that may be accentuated by recruitment difficulties in the new school-based teacher training system. Some universities have abandoned courses in some subjects because they cannot find enough schools to take student-teachers.

Technology and religious education have the highest proportion of unqualified teachers, according to the survey, done in 1992-93. A third of lessons in craft, design and technology, and a quarter of those in RE were taught by teachers lacking relevant qualifications. At least half of those teaching both subjects were inappropriately qualified.

Physical education, history, geography, English and some foreign languages had more than a quarter of teachers possessing no more than A levels in the subject. Stephen Byers, MP for Wallsend, expressed concern over the figures, which he was given in a Commons reply.

Geoffrey Parker, of the new Teacher Training Agency, has acknowledged that recruit-

ment to the teaching profession is likely to be less buoyant as the economy picks up.

The switch to school-based training has run into problems. The Universities Council for the Training of Teachers has reported "considerable" difficulties in finding school placements for those training to teach mathematics, science, modern languages, music and minority subjects. Mary Russell, the council's secretary, said some universities had had to cut their intake by over 10 per cent because schools were reluctant to commit senior staff to training duties.



Byers: concerned over the figures



Nigel Chaplin decided to join the strike while Angie, his wife, continued to drive. Mr Chaplin now believes that he made a mistake

Bus drivers' strike takes an unusual turn

By MICHAEL HORSNELL

MOMENTS before the smart green-and-yellow bus appears, a red 12-seater van with the Transport and General Workers' Union emblem halts at the bus-stop where waiting passengers are offered a free ride. Result: empty bus, full union vehicle.

The mini-buses were pressed into service after Eastern National sacked 105 of its 150 drivers at Chelmsford for staging half-day strikes over new flexible duty schedules that they claim are unsafe. With the backing of Bill Morris, TGWU general secretary, six vehicles owned by the union or hired for £600 a month and driven by sacked members have hijacked two routes operated by the Badgerline subsidiary.

The tactic is aimed at cutting revenue and winning the hearts of the people of Chelmsford. The company says it is losing £100 a day in fares but the union claims it loses over £200 a day.

Joan Pound, 65, a union bus passenger, said: "They were wrongly sacked. New terms and conditions were imposed and now they're fighting back. I admire them



The union hopes that its use of mini-buses will cut Eastern National's revenue

even if this doesn't get them back their jobs."

The eight-week dispute has led to upset in one family. While Angie Chaplin, 36, refused to go on strike, her husband Nigel, a driver for 14 years, joined in. She now drives in competition with the union vehicles while Mr Chaplin remains at home.

Mr Chaplin, 36, said: "I thought it was a good cause but I soon realised I'd made a mistake and I couldn't get reinstated. His wife said: 'The strike was a game of bluff by the union which went horribly wrong. Now working members are paying subscriptions to support a free service in competition

against us. They could lose us our jobs.' The couple, who can no longer meet mortgage commitments, have had excrement pushed through their letter-box and received threatening calls.

Alan Tebbitt, 47, a British Empire Medal holder, who was sacked, says: "I'm a non-militant but when the com-

pany said we had no democratic right to go on strike, I decided I would exercise my right."

He is one of 32 drivers running the 20-minute services that net £200 a day in donations. The mini-buses are insured for passengers, because no fares are charged, an operator's licence is not necessary. The hopes of the strikers, who receive £35-a-week distress money, rest on an extension of the dispute.

Eastern National, which said strikers had dismissed themselves, will be back to full strength next month after recruiting staff from 485 applications.

The dispute arose when drivers on a fixed 7hr 45min day refused to accept a flexible maximum of 8hr 30min, which Eastern National said would mean an average shift of 7hr 50min. Drivers at the company's three other depots had accepted the change. Drivers claim the rota would mean working 4hr 45min without rest, a claim disputed by management.

Robin Orbell, Eastern National managing director, said a 4 per cent pay award in 1992 was conditional on productivity improvements.



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MoD man held after arms raid

AN EMPLOYEE of the Ministry of Defence was arrested yesterday after police had raided his home and found a cache of arms. The middle-aged man was captured after eluding police for 48 hours.

Ministry and West Midlands Police officers had raided the man's home on Friday night after moving neighbours in Wednesfield, Wolverhampton, from their homes. A spokeswoman for the MoD said 50 weapons, including shotguns, other firearms and ammunition belonging to the ministry were taken away.

One neighbour, who declined to be named, said the man had no friends in the street and was often seen leaving his semi-detached home dressed in camouflage fatigues.

Detective Inspector Sid Lewis of the MoD Police in Stafford said: "The man is employed by the MoD and we have removed a quantity of equipment from his house." Officers had found guns and camouflage material belonging to the MoD during the search, which was due to continue for at least another two days.

Crash prompts tougher medicals for old pilots

By HARVEY ELLIOTT, AIR CORRESPONDENT

ELDERLY pilots face tougher regular medical examinations to ensure they are fit to fly after the death of a 73-year-old man at the controls of his light aircraft. James Yates, who learnt to fly at the age of 66, and who was subsequently found to have a history of heart disease, crashed on a farm in Lincolnshire, last October.

Air accident investigators recommended that the Civil Aviation Authority reviewed the way pilots were given medical examinations and urged them to discuss procedures with safety authorities in Europe and America.

Mr Yates, from Winchester, had taken off from Blackbushe airfield in his privately-owned Grumman Tiger single-engine aircraft for a flight that appeared to be progressing normally. Suddenly, however, ground controllers lost contact and wreckage was found later near Waddington in Lincolnshire. The aircraft, which was apparently intact with complete flying controls, had hit the ground at high speed. A post-

mortem examination showed that Mr Yates had "severe ongoing coronary artery disease" and medical records showed that he had suffered chest pains since 1984 and raised blood pressure.

So far no firm evidence has been found to show that Mr Yates died as a result of a heart attack during the flight. In his last examination in June, the ECG was regarded as "borderline" although the pilot "appeared to have had no subjective symptoms of heart disease sufficient to cause him to consult his own doctor."

However, investigators said in a preliminary report that "in retrospect" they had shown abnormalities developing over the past two years. "With the benefit of hindsight these might reasonably have prompted more exhaustive further testing, particularly in view of the subject's age," they say.

"While it is recognised that no system of medical examination will detect all cases of significant cardiac disease it is recommended that the medical division of the CAA

should review the cardiovascular requirements of the medical examination and certification of elderly pilots," the investigators say.

The CAA has already begun an urgent review of the rules, which now state that all private pilots between the ages of 40 and 49 have a medical examination every two years, including an ECG heart examination. Between the ages of 50 and 69 such examinations have to take place once a year and after the age of 70 they must be conducted every six months.

In the United States no heart ECGs are required and nowhere is there an absolute age limit on pilots. There have been no cases of elderly pilots dying at the controls of a light aircraft although four crashes involving microlights and gliders have involved pilots aged over 65.

The CAA now hopes to be able to develop new and more sophisticated techniques for detecting potential heart trouble much earlier and preventing those pilots who may be at risk from taking to the air.

Guns aim to cut down 'black plague'

By JACK CROSSLEY

THE sound of gunfire along the banks of the Wye this month will bring joy to anglers and despair to bird lovers. The targets will be cormorants, fish-hungry scavengers that have moved inland for easy pickings on waters coveted by anglers.

The fishermen's joy will be short-lived, according to experts who say that as fast as the cormorants are shot, others will fly in to take their place.

The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds sees government permission for the shooting on the Wye in Hereford and Worcester as an undesired victory for the vociferous angling lobby. "Wipe out the black plague" is representative of the headlines in the fishing press. Ken Ball, president of the

National Federation of Anglers, told the *Angling Times*: "In my opinion the short-term answer to the problem is to shoot the bloody things."

Roy Eastwood, editor of *Angler's Mail*, has thundered in his opinion column about the "decade of damage" caused by thousands of cormorants that prefer the easy inland winter to the difficulties of life at sea.

The bird lobby could not disagree more. It is dismayed that the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food appears to be granting more licences than ever and points to scientific reports supporting its case. In a recent paper entitled "Do cormorants find anglers indestructible?" Mark Feltham, senior lecturer in animal ecology at Liverpool John Moores University,



The cormorant

says: "The fishing lobby has remained persistent and evermore vocal in their demands for tough action to curb the 'black plague'. The scale of the cormorant problem may, however, have been exaggerated and shooting does not alter the attractiveness of a fishery to new birds

that often come in to replace shot birds." He goes on: "Let us be clear about one thing, at the moment there is no question of a cormorant cull. Under current legislation, shooting is only permitted to reinforce other methods of scaring, which must have been tried."

Ministry policy reflects this. Of the hundreds of cormorants along the Wye, permission has been given to shoot fewer than 30 between now and March 31.

Even so, Major David Shaw, who runs a fishery on the river, welcomes the licences. "They are a recognition that these birds are doing considerable damage to fish stocks. It is not a case of trying to cull a species of fish-eating bird to extinction, but to get control over a predator that is increasing by 5 to 10 per cent a year."

'It is a very nice little earner, a real gravy train'

Builders excluded from Parkhurst cost £200,000

By RICHARD FORD
HOME CORRESPONDENT

THE Prison Service has paid more than £200,000 to hundreds of building workers who have been barred from working at Parkhurst since the escape of two murderers and an arsonist.

Contractors have been unable to carry on refurbishment at the top-security jail while investigations by the police and Prison Service continue. The tradesmen's wage bill is being met by the taxpayer. Prison Service managers will attempt to find work for the contractors today at other jails to try to secure a return for the £16,000 a day they are paid.

Richard Gully, chairman of the prison's Board of Visitors, said: "Parkhurst is full of people involved in the investigation and the last thing that is wanted during that is contractors all over the place." Work was unlikely to restart for some weeks. The stoppage would delay the transfer of 130 high-risk prisoners from other



Lewis awaiting inquiry findings

prisons to new wings at Parkhurst.

One contractor said: "The Home Office is picking up the bill. It is a nice little earner, a real gravy train, and the toast at the moment is 'Here's to Williams, Roger and Rose' [the recaptured escapees]."

A few workers are still being allowed inside, under close

supervision of officers, to complete the installation of the vibration-sensitive geophones in the prison's security system, which would have alerted warders to the escape.

A Prison Service spokeswoman said: "We had to stop work at the prison while the inquiry into the escape is going on. We hope it will be possible soon for work to resume and we are also looking to see if the contractors can be given work elsewhere."

Meanwhile Derek Lewis, Director-General of the Prison Service, said yesterday that he held out the prospect of the former governor of Parkhurst being appointed to run another jail.

Mr Lewis said that there was nothing to stop John Marriott from running another prison if the inquiry did not blame him. Only Parkhurst would not be available to Mr Marriott, 48, because the service will soon appoint a new governor.

He emphasised that the decision whether disciplinary

action should be taken against Mr Marriott was not prejudiced by Michael Howard's statement in the Commons. "There is no presumption of guilt at all," Mr Lewis told *Breakfast with Frost* on BBC1.

However, it is unlikely that Mr Marriott will be given charge of another prison under the present regime at the Home Office.

Mr Lewis said he would have to consider resignation if he was found by an independent prison inquiry to have been "personally at fault" for the break-out. He said: "If I was personally culpable for some of the individual things that went wrong in either Parkhurst or Whitemoor, yes clearly that might well affect my position."

An inquiry has started at Whitemoor prison at March in Cambridgeshire into the suicide of an inmate. Prison officers found Mark Holmes, aged 28, hanging in his cell at 5.30am on Saturday. Holmes was convicted in 1992 of raping a girl aged 14.



Tiger, aged 10, with Nick Roberts, who returned daily to search for the family pet after the house was wrecked in a gas blast. "It's a miracle he survived," he said.

Tom-cat survives house gas blast

A FAMILY who thought their pet tom-cat had died in a gas explosion that reduced their 17th-century cottage to rubble has turned up three weeks later little the worse for wear. Tiger was in the kitchen when the stone house blew up, scattering the sleeping occupants and their possessions over nine acres.

Stuart Roberts, 27, suffered severe spinal injuries when he was thrown, still on his mattress, through the bedroom window and onto the pavement below. His parents Alan, 54, and Rosemary Roberts, 53, crashed to the ground as the first floor collapsed.

After the explosion the couple's other son Nick returned to the scene in Keynsham, Avon, each day to look for Tiger.

"I kept going back and looking through the rubble and suddenly there was Tiger at the bottom of the field. He had lost his whiskers and his fur was badly singed. He seemed a little dazed, but the vet said he was perfectly all right."

SHEEHAN on BRIDGE

Dealer South Love all. Rubber bridge

♠ K874	♥ QJ32	♦ A	♣ J942
♠ QJ1092	♥ 10765	♦ K83	♣ Q
♠ A65	♥ A4	♦ Q865	♣ A765
S	W	N	E
1NT (1)	Pass	2♦ (2)	Pass
2♦	Pass	3NT	Pass
3NT	Pass	4♦	Pass
Rubik (4)	All pass		
Opening lead: ♠Q			

By ROBERT SHEEHAN
BRIDGE CORRESPONDENT

(1) 12-14 HCP
(2) Stayman — asking for four card major
(3) Good rubber bridge players often double contracts which would be played undoubled in a tournament. In this sequence East knows that North-South have nothing to spare, and he sees that there are bad breaks in the minors. Even so, I would have been too chicken to do it — the likely spade lead may work out badly.
(4) Ludicrously macho. It is almost never correct to redouble when you have no surprises for the opposition — just having a maximum is not enough. South needs a concealed source of tricks: something like a five-card club suit to the ace-queen-nine, as well as a maximum point count.
Declarer ducked the queen of spades and took the next spade with the ace, East

discarding a diamond. Hoping for a miracle in clubs, he continued with a low club. West won and played a spade, won in dummy with the king. Now declarer led the jack of clubs, trying to make three club tricks if West had started with the queen-ten alone. East obviously covered the jack: after winning the ace the declarer tried ace and another heart. A diamond from East after he won the king of hearts completed the debacle.

South made only six tricks — two spades, two hearts, and two minor-suit aces for a 1,000 point penalty. East, the doubler, made one trick and West managed six.

I suppose the triskaidekaphobes may have enjoyed Friday the 13th's column. Apologies to the other readers. The contract was Four Hearts Doubled, and West (who should have bid 4NT over Four Hearts, now that I look at it again) led the ace of diamonds.

KEENE on CHESS

By RAYMOND KEENE
CHESS CORRESPONDENT

Short and sweet
Nigel Short got off to a good start in the international knockout tournament at Wijk aan Zee in The Netherlands, easily dispatching his opponent in the first round. Other leading competitors are Britain's Michael Adams, the Dutch grandmaster Jan Timman and American grandmaster Yasser Seirawan.

White: Short
Black: Tregubov
Wijk aan Zee, January 1995

1 e4	c5
2 Nf3	c6
3 c3	c5
4 exd5	exd5
5 d4	Nb6
6 Bc3	Bb7
7 O-O	O-O
8 Re1	Re8
9 Bg5	g6
10 Nbd2	g7
11 Nf1	g6
12 cxd4	Nb8
13 Ne5	Nb7
14 Bb7	Re7
15 Nf3	Re1
16 Qd2	Qb6
17 Qc2	Nf6
18 Ng3	Ng4
19 Re1	Bg4
20 Bb6	h5
21 Ng5	Nf7
22 Nf7	Kd7
23 h3	Be6
24 Re1	Bd7
25 d3	Qd6
26 Ne2	Re8
27 Nc3	Qb4
28 Rd1	a5
29 h4	Re6
30 g3	b5
31 f3	

After 37 ... axb4 38 Nd3 Black will lose two pawns by force.

Martin wins
The indefatigable Chris Dumworth has organised yet another international title standard tournament in London. On this latest occasion, the St Peters de Beauvoir International, first prize was taken by the New Zealand master Ben Martin with 6 points from 9 possible. Other leading scores were: Whiteley 5.5, and Dunworth, Harley, McDonald and Olesen 5.

Linares tournament
In spite of earlier doubts, this year's Linares super tournament will run from February 28 until March 18, with a field including Kasparov, Karpov, Shirov, Kramnik, Ivanchuk, Short, Polgar and Adams.

Winning Move, page 44

JANUARY SALE?

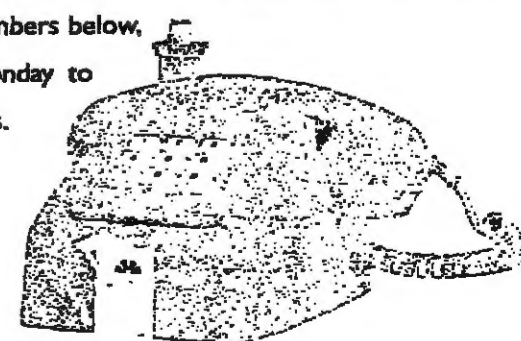
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Saudi manoeuvres heighten tension on Yemen border

FROM MICHAEL THEODOULOU IN NICOSIA

EGYPT was leading urgent Arab mediation efforts last night to defuse a territorial row between Saudi Arabia and Yemen after reports that they had reinforced troops along their disputed, oil-rich border where there have been isolated clashes in recent weeks.

Egypt, friendly with both countries, said they were keen to reach a "decent settlement" without resorting to guns. The crisis dominated an emergency meeting in Cairo between President Mubarak and President Ali Abdullah Saleh of Yemen, who stopped by on his way to Paris for a three-nation European tour.

"I believe there is a keenness to reach a decent settlement based on understanding, away from any deterioration of the situation, and by avoiding any possibility of clashes on the borders between the two brotherly states," said Salwa Sherif, Egypt's Information Minister. Mr Mubarak was also in "constant contact" with Saudi Arabia.

Yemenis appeared less optimistic. "They way things are evolving, there is a real possibility of escalation in the war," said Abdul Aziz Sakka, the Editor-in-Chief of the Yemen Times. "There is a lot of bad feeling on both sides."

There were unconfirmed reports that Saudi troops were massing near Harad in north-western Yemen. Al-Buqa in the north and the southeastern province of Al-Mahrah. They

were supported by rocket launchers and had brought in American-built F15 warplanes to replace ageing F5s at Harad and Al-Buqa, Yemeni security sources said. Yemen denied reports that its forces had moved troops to the border and had occupied positions within Saudi Arabia.

There were suspicions in Yemen that Saudi Arabia had escalated border tensions in the hope that Mr Saleh would cancel his European tour. "He's going to visit three very critical countries — France, The Netherlands and Germany — countries that have

Three die in Israeli raid

Beirut Israeli planes attacked a Palestinian guerrilla base near the Lebanese capital yesterday, killing three people and closing Beirut airport for an hour. An Alitalia flight from Rome and two flights of Lebanon's Middle East Airlines, from London and Geneva, were diverted to Larnaca in Cyprus, airport authorities said. Security sources said three people were killed as four Israeli jets fired rockets at the hills above the coastal village of Naameh, about ten miles south of Beirut. It was the third Israeli raid in Lebanon in six days. (Reuters)

been least influenced by Saudi pressures within the European group," Mr Sakka said. Tension has increased since the new year after Saudi Arabia and Yemen failed to renew the Taif agreement of 1994 which set the de facto frontiers between the two states and which comes up for renewal every 20 years. Diplomats said several rounds of talks had centred on procedural rather than substantive matters.

A high-level Yemeni delegation led by Sheikh Abdullah Bin Hussein Amar, the parliamentary Speaker, was due in Saudi Arabia yesterday to ease border tensions, but postponed the visit at Riyadh's request. The talks were intended to pave the way for the Yemeni President to visit Saudi Arabia.

Bitter animosities rooted in territorial and tribal disputes date back to the early 1930s when Saudi Arabia defeated Yemen in a border war and ceded control of provinces that are still disputed. Relations soured in 1990 when Saudi Arabia opposed the unification of North and South Yemen, fearing a more populous but impoverished neighbour to the south that claimed a commitment to democracy. Later that year, Yemen infuriated Saudi Arabia by sympathising with Iraq in the Kuwait crisis and more than a million Yemeni workers were expelled from the kingdom.

Washington is keeping up the pressure on Peking over human rights as US and other Western trade continues, writes James Pringle, the new Times correspondent in Peking



Washington is keeping up the pressure on Peking over human rights as US and other Western trade continues, writes James Pringle, the new Times correspondent in Peking

China rejects US dissident query

PÉKING, signalling no let-up in its recent more draconian stance on dissidents, yesterday rejected high-level American efforts to try to discover what has happened to Wei Jingsheng, China's most prominent democracy activist.

Mr Wei was re-arrested last April after infuriating Chinese security agencies by meeting John Shattuck, the US Assistant Secretary of State for Human Rights.

Mr Shattuck said in Peking yesterday, after failing to obtain news of Mr Wei, a former electrician, that he knew he had not been charged. The dissident served most of a 15-year sentence in a labour camp for alleged sedition after calling Deng Xiaoping, China's paramount leader, a "despot" and campaigning for "the fifth modernisation — democracy" during the Democracy Wall period in 1979.

His whereabouts and those of Tong Yi, his female secretary, are a mystery to the

foreign diplomatic community. He was originally released in September 1993 shortly before the International Olympic Committee was to decide the 2000 Olympics venue. Even China's repressive punishment machinery had not been enough to subdue Mr Wei, however. Once freed, he resumed his campaign for rights and democracy.

Police, who have a right to hold citizens for three years under "administrative detention", claim Mr Wei is under "residential surveillance", although he has not been seen by his family since last April.

China's latest crackdown on political activists began early last year, foreign envoys say, when Peking began to be concerned that rising inflation could be exploited by dissidents. Inflation was one of the touchstones of popular unrest in the lead-up to the violent suppression of pro-democracy demonstrations in Tiananmen Square in 1989.

Mr Shattuck, who saw officials in the Foreign, Public Security and Justice ministries while he was here, painted a gloomy picture of human rights in China, saying there had not been any improvement in the past year, particularly in freedom of speech, association and religion. But he thought there had been "some positive developments" in longer-term areas of legal reform.

While the Americans last year removed the link between China's most favoured nation trading status and human rights, envoys here say that Washington is at least keeping up some form of diplomatic pressure through the regular visits of Mr Shattuck. Other Western states seem to have given up the struggle in favour of tapping China's vast economic market.

"These are difficult times for the Chinese Government, with high inflation and rural joblessness, and it's best to keep the talks going even if no progress is being made now," a Western envoy said. "If the link, however tenuous, is broken, it will be harder to resume dialogue on human rights issues later."

US prepares to pull troops out of Haiti

FROM JAMES BONE IN NEW YORK

AMERICA will this week declare the creation of a "stable and secure environment" in Haiti, opening the way for the transfer of the multinational intervention force to United Nations command before the end of March.

Diplomats say that the commander of the American-led force in Haiti will make the announcement to the UN Security Council tomorrow, despite the killing of the first American soldier in the Caribbean country last week.

The Security Council will respond by increasing the UN presence in Haiti so that it is ready to assume control from the American-led force which intervened last October to restore Jean-Bertrand Aristide, the President who was ousted in a 1991 coup.

The council is also expected to draft a new mandate for the

enlarged UN force, instructing it to maintain the "secure environment", to oversee parliamentary polls due next year and to train a Haitian police force to take over when UN troops leave in February 1996.

At the height of the US intervention, there were 21,000 American troops in Haiti. There are about 8,000 soldiers in the multinational force. The UN plans to station a force of 6,000 in Haiti, with up to 3,000 American servicemen remaining there under UN command.

Congress has been putting the Clinton Administration under pressure to pull American troops out of Haiti. But some UN officials have said that if the troops are removed too soon there may be a repeat of the debacle in Somalia, where fighting flared as soon as the UN took command.

Test star urged to run for high office

BY ZAHED HUSSAIN IN KARACHI AND EVRANNY DIMITRIAKIS

MILLIONS of Pakistanis are lobbying Imran Khan, the former Test cricket player, to try to persuade him to move on from fast bowling to fast talking and stand for election as Prime Minister.

Life-sized images of him have appeared throughout Lahore, his home city, along with huge billboards proclaiming him "Prime Minister". Tens of thousands of people recently thronged Lahore's giant stadium when he attended the opening of a hospital named after his mother, Shaikat Khanum, who died of cancer.

Imran, 42, retired from Test cricket after leading Pakistan to victory in the World Cup final against England in Australia in 1992. Since then, he has abandoned his Armani suits in favour of traditional Pakistani clothes as he launches tirades against what he describes as his nation's corrupt and anglicised elite.

The Oxford-educated Imran, who has been linked with Stephanie Beacham, Goldie Hawn and Emma Sargent, the British painter, has also announced that he will marry a conservative Muslim girl this year.



Imran: has abandoned his Armani suits

Hostage killers go unpunished in Cambodia amnesty

FROM CHRISTOPHER THOMAS IN PHNOM PENH

THE Khmer Rouge guerrilla commander who kidnapped three British tourists in southern Cambodia last year — all murdered in a jungle hideout three months later — has defected to the Government under an amnesty and will not be punished. "I pitied them," he said. "What they were killed for, I do not know."

He revealed that Pol Pot, responsible for a million deaths in the "killing fields" reign of terror in the 1970s, personally gave the order to take the men hostage when they were discovered on a passenger train that had been halted and looted. This confirms that the mass murderer is still leading the Khmer Rouge campaign designed to restore them to power.

Pol Pot, using the codename Number 99, evidently directed events by radio from a hideout near the Thai border while the British, French and Australian Governments appealed for the men's lives, knowing secretly that there was little chance of success.

Chhouk Rin, a pleasant-looking man with a scarred face from a bullet wound and a mangled foot from a landmine, had the rank of colonel in the Khmer Rouge. He led the ambush on a train

in Kampong province last July, in which the foreigners were travelling.

He became a lieutenant-colonel in the Royal Cambodian Armed Forces this month under the terms of a six-month amnesty, which expired yesterday. He will not be punished for his significant role in the "killing fields" campaign, which ended when the Khmer Rouge regime was toppled by a Vietnamese invasion in late 1978.

Mark Slater, from England, David Wilson, an Australian, and Jean-Michel Braquet, a Frenchman, were heading south to the coast when their train was halted. The Cambodian Government has since banned foreigners from travelling by train outside Phnom Penh.

Lieutenant-Colonel Rin, who was with the Khmer Rouge for 24 years, said he interviewed the hostages through an interpreter on Vine Mountain. They thought that as they were only tourists they would be released; they had not seemed frightened. "I told them I thought it would be done quickly. I didn't know it was such a political, military and diplomatic thing. I pitied them because they were foreigners who could not live in the jungle like I could."

US tourist killed

Phnom Penh: An American woman and her Cambodian tour guide were killed yesterday when their vehicle was hit by gunfire in the northwest of Cambodia.

The woman's husband, also an American, was injured in the shooting 15 miles north of the provincial town of Siem Reap on the road to Banteay Srei temple, long Mouly, the Information Minister said. "He was evacuated to Phnom Penh for medical care

and his condition is described as stable," the minister said. It was not clear whether the those involved in the "shooting incident" were Khmer Rouge guerrillas or rural bandits. The United States Embassy in Phnom Penh said last night it could not immediately identify either the woman or her husband. Siem Reap is home to the 12th century Angkor War temple complex, the country's biggest tourist attraction. (AFP)

Saddam 'faced air force coup'

Tehran: Iraqi air force officers mounted a coup against President Saddam Hussein but he escaped the assassins' bullets at the al-Ramadi palace, near Baghdad, the official Iraqi news agency reported yesterday.

Quoting Iraqi sources in Amman, the Jordanian capital, the agency said 14 air force officers were arrested and their alleged ringleader, General Muhammad Mazoum al-Dalimi, was "savagely" executed. But Iraq gave no date for the failed coup, and there was no immediate comment on the report from Baghdad or the Iraqi opposition in exile. (AFP)

Holocaust study

Frankfurt: Germany's first centre for the study of Nazi genocide has opened, 50 years after the war. The Fritz Bauer Foundation is named after the prosecutor in the trials of SS men who ran Auschwitz. (AP)

Peace offer

Paris: Algeria's militant Armed Islamic Group said it was prepared to end its war against the Government if Algerians accepted a plan for a settlement drafted by main opposition groups. (Reuters)

Niger unrest

Niamey: Troops were called out after two supporters of Niger's main pro-government party were wounded in incidents following an opposition victory in parliamentary elections. (AFP)

Death watch

Delhi: Indian authorities have found the skeleton of a policeman whose wife kept his body wrapped in a quilt on their balcony for nearly two years, because she thought he might return to life. (Reuters)

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Calls for new Malcolm X death inquiry

BY JAMES BONE

THE arrest of Malcolm X's daughter has spawned a conspiracy theory that promises to become the black American equivalent of "Who killed JFK?" Qubilah Shabazz, 34, who saw her father's assassination in 1965, was charged last week with trying to hire a hitman to kill the rival black Muslim leader, Louis Farrakhan, whom the family suspects of involvement in Malcolm X's death.

Within hours, however, it emerged that the proposed hitman was a government informer. Both the alleged perpetrator and the intended victim accused the Government of orchestrating a conspiracy. Ms Shabazz's lawyer accused the informer of acting as an agent provocateur, while Mr Farrakhan's Nation of Islam organisation said the Government was trying to split the black community.

At the centre of the controversy is Michael Fitzpatrick, a childhood friend of Ms Shabazz, who changed his identity and entered a witness protection programme after giving evidence for the prosecution about a bomb plot by a radical Jewish group.

Mr Fitzpatrick infiltrated the New Jewish Defence League, a militant splinter group of Rabbi Meir Kahane's extremist JDL. However, his real purpose was to act as a paid FBI informant, and in 1978 he unmasked a plot by the group to bomb the Egyptian tourist office in New York. With government help, Mr Fitzpatrick began a new life as Michael Summers, and dropped out of sight in Minnesota until last week.

Prosecutors allege that Ms Shabazz had plotted Mr Farrakhan's assassination with Mr Fitzpatrick, and had given him a down-payment for the job. He is

expected to appear in court for the prosecution. Newspapers reported at the weekend that Mr Fitzpatrick was arrested in a drug raid in Minneapolis in November 1993 and appeared in court under the name Michael Kevin Summers. The case, due back in court last week, was mysteriously postponed.

Ms Shabazz's arrest comes after a recent documentary film asserting that Mr Farrakhan, who used to call himself "Louis X", played a part in the plot to assassinate Malcolm X. Mr Farrakhan denies involvement in the killing.

Just as the Oliver Stone film JFK prompted calls for the Government to open the files on President Kennedy's assassination, so have the arrest of Ms Shabazz and the revelations about the role of a government informer led to pressure for an investigation into the death of Malcolm X.

How to decode your cat's tail talk

Why do cats have what we call a "doff" half hour in the evening, tearing around like mad things, just one of more than a hundred questions answered in a new book, *Your Amazing Cat*. Submitted by readers, these questions have been thoroughly investigated by the author, who goes all out to explain some of the mysteries of everyday cat life including:

- Does your cat have a "doff" half hour?
- Why should you have more than one cat?
- Why a cat won't look at you after it has been scolded?
- How cats use body language.
- How do cats find their way home from great distances?

- Why cats wake you up so early
- How do the Chinese use cats to tell the time?
- And many, many more.

These questions and answers, well over one hundred in all, will provide you with hours of delightful reading. A very quotable book that's sure to be popular with your cat loving friends, too. Order your *Amazing Cat* now direct from the publisher and save. To order send your name, address and £9.95 which includes postage and handling (cheque or credit card, please, with exp. date) to: Cat Books, Dept. VC2, Abingdon, Oxfordshire OX14 3UE. You can return your copy for a full refund at any time within the next three months.

Rose considered showing airstrike plans to Serbs

Sarajevo blockade 'threatens truce deal'

FROM JOEL BRAND IN ZAGREB

THE United Nations commander in Bosnia, Lieutenant-General Sir Michael Rose, wanted to give Bosnian Serbs advance copies of secret Nato flight plans in an attempt to win their co-operation, Nato and UN sources alleged yesterday.

A spokesman for General Rose said that no such documents had yet been provided to the Serbs.

Lieutenant-Colonel Gary Coward, a UN spokesman in Sarajevo, said: "As a part of the cessation of hostilities [agreement], it was felt here that in the spirit of co-operation one of the measures the UN Protection Force could take was to advise both parties of air operations. I don't know if a decision had been taken, but it was being considered as an option."

Top Nato officers were opposed to disclosing the plans. A Nato source, speaking on condition of anonymity, said: "If the entire plan was given out, it leaves us very little

security to our operations." It is not something that you hand out to a party which has the capability to do us harm—and in fact has done so in the past." The Bosnian Serbs had demanded advance copies of the Nato flight plans at a key meeting with General Rose in December.

The UN commander had been trying to persuade them to end their blockade of peace-keeping troops and to allow the Sarajevo airlift to resume. At that time, UN officers and officials dismissed the flight plan demand as impossible on the ground of risks to Nato military security.

Concerned that General Rose might breach Nato security, alliance officers stopped providing the UN military command with their regular daily plan of warplane activity over Bosnia on Saturday.

The affront enraged General Rose, who threatened to call a press conference to denounce Nato for obstructing the UN peacekeeping mission

in Bosnia. Hearing of General Rose's intentions, Admiral Leighton Smith, the American commander of Nato forces in Southern Europe, quickly telephoned the UN commander and dissuaded him after a heated discussion.

Later in the day, General Rose drafted a letter of apology to Admiral Smith, according to a source.

At the UN's headquarters in Zagreb, an official said they were not aware of such an arrangement, or that it was being considered. He dismissed suggestions that the idea of providing information about Nato military operations would be helpful to both warring parties.

"The only party that is going to come under airstrikes is the Serbs," the official said. "The Serbs have always requested this, and it is all part of a package of weakening the Nato operation to a point which suits the Serbs. It is being done in the hope of securing Serb co-operation."

General Rose, who has been lauded by the British Government, has crossed swords with top Nato officials on several occasions in the past over how to respond to Serb provocations. Last November, he effectively undermined the threat of Nato airstrikes when he argued successfully against alliance commanders who wanted to destroy Serb air defence systems that had been targeting and firing on their warplanes.

General Rose has often stated his concern that a confrontation between Nato and the Bosnian Serbs would end the UN humanitarian mission and endanger many of his 23,000 troops.

The former commander of the Special Air Service regiment will be replaced on schedule, January 24, after completing his one-year tour in Bosnia. In July he is to be awarded his fourth star and assume one of the top three posts in the British Army, Adjutant-General.

FROM REUTERS IN SARAJEVO

BOSNIAN Serbs are jeopardising a nationwide ceasefire by refusing to end a blockade of supply routes into Sarajevo and the shelling of Bihac. United Nations officials said yesterday.

Lieutenant-General Sir Michael Rose, the commander of UN troops in Bosnia-Herzegovina, and aides went yesterday to the Bosnian Serb headquarters in Pale as part of fresh efforts to repair the fraying two-week truce. But they emerged with no agreement on the reopening of the "blue routes" into the Bosnian capital.

General Rose's plan to reopen civilian routes into Sarajevo failed on Saturday when Serb forces brought up last-minute preconditions and threatened to fire on vehicles if their demands were ignored. UN officials said. The Serb leadership denied it had threatened to fire at cars.

UN sources said the Serbs were posing "ridiculous" conditions such as notification of each vehicle and the right to confiscate anything aboard "they don't like."

Lieutenant-Colonel Gary Coward, a UN spokesman, said: "If the BSA [Bosnian Serb Army] is not prepared to come to some sort of arrangement, then this puts the peace process in jeopardy."

A woman, 19, was killed yesterday in Bihac, in the northwest, when a mortar bomb hit a school, according to Paul Risley, a UN spokesman. A 15-year-old girl died and her mother was wounded when a second shell struck a nearby building.

Bosnian state radio said that 11 people were wounded in the attacks. Five Bihac residents were killed and at least four were injured on Saturday when a mortar bomb hit a bridge.

Mr Risley could not rule out that Krajina Serbs from Croatia, who did not sign the new ceasefire, had fired the mortar rounds.



The first vehicles pass through a checkpoint on the new UN "blue route" at Sarajevo airport before the Serbs halted traffic

General prepares to hand over Bosnia baton

BY MICHAEL EVANS DEFENCE CORRESPONDENT

ANOTHER senior British Army figure will this month take over the unenviable responsibility of commanding the 24,000 United Nations troops in Bosnia-Herzegovina. As Lieutenant-General Sir Michael Rose leaves the post after 12 gruelling months, Major-General Rupert Smith, a Gulf War veteran, moves in.

Few would disagree that the job is one of the most taxing and politically sensitive roles for any army officer. General Rose spent much of his career in the SAS, yet the Bosnian command has been one of his toughest assignments. Like his predecessors, Generals Philippe Morillon, Francis Briquemont and Lewis Mackenzie, he has had to face the daily frustrations of dealing with warring commanders who rarely keep their word and are expert in guile and deceit.

General Briquemont, from Belgium, left early, confessing that the job was impossible, not just because of local difficulties but because of the frustrating influence of the UN in New York.

Since his departure and the subsequent tour of duty by General Morillon — the Frenchman who achieved so much, yet left with Sarajevo still a daily target for Serb artillery fire — the role



Smith: regarded as key strategic thinker during the Gulf War

of UN commander has become even more complex. General Rose began his tour with a robustness and determination that encouraged new optimism. Nobody can take away from him the part he played in silencing the Serb guns around the Bosnian capital. Although there have been serious violations in recent months and failures of strategy over Gorazde and

Bihac, Sarajevo is still a safer place than it was when General Morillon went home.

Despite the sniping from critics in the United States and the British Government over allegations of bias towards the Serbs — his predecessors faced the same charge — as far as his men are concerned, General Rose has been a charismatic leader, travelling around meeting the troops with his huge bodyguard, nicknamed Goose.

General Smith, 51, has the same advantages as General Rose. Although he has not served in the SAS, he comes from another tough military background in the Parachute Regiment. He is tall, quietly spoken with a piercing gaze, and has an independent, sharp military mind. He is often described as a "soldier's soldier", and has combat experience. He led Britain's armoured division in the Gulf War and was credited with being one of the key strategic thinkers in the allied victory.

He has also been intimately involved in Britain's efforts in Bosnia, in his capacity as assistant chief of the defence staff (operations and plans).

As commander in Bosnia from January 24, General Smith will need all his diplomatic skills to fulfil his UN mandate and cope with the political pressures from New York, Nato, Washington and all the "experts" who think they can do the job better than

him. If the war deteriorates, he may have to mastermind the withdrawal of UN troops. If a peace agreement is reached, his role will switch to peace-keeping on a grand scale.

An intensely private man, he shuns publicity and was the least known of the British commanders in the Gulf. His inspirational leadership and charisma were such, however, that his troops used to say they would have followed him anywhere. After his success in the Gulf War, he won the DSO for his cool command under fire. General Smith was educated at Haileybury, where he was noted as a boxer. He enlisted as a private in the Duke of Edinburgh's Regiment and was commissioned into the Parachute Regiment, of which he is now the Colonel Commandant. His professionalism, lively humour and critical attitude to military dogma quickly brought him to the attention of senior officers. One instructor said: "He had a calm, relaxed attitude and gave the impression that he always had something in reserve in critical situations."

Commanding a rifle company in Northern Ireland in 1978, he and a junior officer were injured in a car bomb attack. General Smith won the Queen's Gallantry Medal for pulling his fellow officer free without regard to his own safety and smothering the flames on his body.

"I want affordable healthcare that doesn't cut corners."

Latest Yeltsin move may herald purge of military

FROM RICHARD BEESTON
IN MOSCOW

MOSCOW has ordered disciplinary action against officers involved in the military operation in Chechnya who refuse to obey orders.

In a move that could herald a purge of the armed forces, reports here said that state prosecutors had held an emergency meeting on Saturday to consider evidence against a group of officers, including generals, who are being investigated.

The decision appears to be an attempt by President Yeltsin, the commander-in-chief, to reimpose discipline in his forces and to quell the rising level of discontent in his officer corps. Angered by the disastrous and costly campaign in the Caucasus, senior officers have several times refused to send their men into action. At headquarters level, generals have been openly critical of the entire five-week military operation.

There have been several very public cases of insubordination. Only hours into the Russian advance on Grozny, Major-General Ivan Babichev, a paratroop commander in charge of an armoured column, halted its advance when his troops were confronted by unarmed local demonstrators and vowed not to wage war on civilians.

More recently, a detachment of Interior Ministry paramilitary troops, who had served for a month in Chechnya, abandoned their positions and returned to their headquarters in the Urals city of Yekaterinburg. They complained of bad leadership, appalling conditions and poor equipment.

In the latest incident, Major Yevgeny Zhovtortepko, a marine officer serving in Vladivostok, the headquarters of the Russian Pacific Fleet, refused to send his battalion of troops to Chechnya, insisting that they needed urban combat training before being sent into Grozny's streets.

Already President Yeltsin is considering taking personal command of the general staff, and has threatened to sack three Deputy Defence Ministers for their opposition to the way that the campaign has been carried out. One of them, Colonel-General Boris Gromov, who was the last commander of Soviet forces in Afghanistan, has refused to be cowed by the threat of dismissal. Last week, in his most critical attack of the operation, he described Russia's tactics



Wall of death: Chechen women take food into a bunker in Grozny yesterday

as "barbaric military methods".

There are indications that the Kremlin is thinking of other ways to punish its opponents in the military without confronting them head-on. Lieutenant-General Aleksandr Lebed, the popular commander of the 14th Army based in Moldova, is being investigated by a Ministry of Defence team, which many suspect could provide the authorities with an excuse for demoting him.

Nevertheless, a move against the generals would be

difficult and dangerous. Certainly, if Mr Yeltsin does decide to punish his officers, he will almost certainly also have to dismiss General Pavel Grachev, his loyal Defence Minister, who is blamed by the Russian public, the press and the army rank and file for the poor planning of the Chechen campaign and the huge loss of life.

Also, the Russian leader will have to be careful not to push the demoralised military too far and run the risk of provoking a serious military rebellion against his leadership.

Although experts discount the possibility of a military coup in Moscow itself since Mr Yeltsin is protected there by a huge security apparatus, there is perceived to be a very real threat of mutiny in outlying districts.

The Russian army has periodically risen against its political masters. Most famously in 1825, during the failed Decembrist uprising against the Tsar, and again in 1917, when disgruntled and unhappy troops returning from the front provided a catalyst for the Bolshevik Revolution.

Discipline pays for 'rag-tag guerrillas'

FROM ANATOL LIEVEN
IN ALKHAN YURT

AS THE Russian assault on Grozny enters its third week, Western experts are asking how the apparently rag-tag Chechen militia has been able to fight for so long against what is still supposed to be one of the most powerful armies in the world.

A Ukrainian volunteer with the defending forces said: "The Chechens will eventually lose Grozny, but to have fought for so long against such odds means that history will say they were the victors."

A good deal of the Chechens' success is because of intense demoralisation on the Russian side, but they have a great deal to be proud of. The enigma is that the Chechen forces appear to have no organisation or discipline. Units elect their commanders, and individual fighters seem to come and go as they please.

Standing on the edge of the village of Alkhan Yurt, looking towards Russian positions less than two miles away, local volunteers explained that Chechen discipline was deeper and stronger than the Russians imagined. "We are on guard here in case the Russians make a move," said Idris, the group's leader. "If we see something, we fire three shots, and all the 300 or so volunteers in the village will grab their guns and be at their agreed positions within five minutes. The reason this works is that 100 per cent of the population are involved in the defence. Even if the Russians capture Grozny, they will have to fight for every village."

Idris, in peace time an oil refinery worker, said that all over Chechnya the Peoples' Volunteers elect their own commanders, or "elders". Individual volunteers in principle decide themselves when and where to serve, but "they can't just go off with their families whenever they like. The others in the group would not like it, and they would lose respect." He said that the people in every group of ten or 12 volunteers are usually neighbours, often from the same extended family.

Idris said that the Chechen armed forces also have a sort of command structure, made up of local staff, mostly drawn from men with experience in the Soviet or Russian armies.

Many Chechens are still privately strongly opposed to General Dzhokhar Dudayev's rule and a few are still refusing to fight for him. But most of the population appears to have been united by the Russian intervention.

One group of fighters said that a key element in the morale of most Chechens was the deportation of the whole population to Central Asia by Stalin in 1944. Their exile lasted 12 years and about a third died.

The Optimists' Club, which claims to have 1,000 members, has decided to reverse the despondent trend with monthly meetings. "Politicians drill pessimism into the people," said Peter Berek, its spokesman. "If only there were one politician who was encouraging."



Hungarians top world gloom league

FROM ADAM LEBOR IN BUDAPEST

HUNGARIANS have confirmed their national stereotype as a maudlin bunch in a public opinion poll that identifies them as the most pessimistic country in the world.

Sixty-three per cent of respondents believe that this year will be worse than last. Only 7 per cent think this year will be better than 1994. Glorifying in their dejection, Hungarians gave more pessimistic responses to all the questions except the possibility of a new world war.

In comparison, less than 40 per cent of the population of former socialist allies such as

Georgia, racked by civil war, and Lithuania, faced by a disintegrating Russia, believe this year will be worse than last. The poll in the *Magyar Hírlap* newspaper, carried out by Gallup International and Mareo in Hungary, questioned 1,000 people in 30 countries.

Although Hungary has produced a string of talented writers and inventive thinkers, credited with items as diverse as the atomic bomb and the ballpoint pen, its citizens admit their tendency to depression is legendary. Hungarian rates of suicide,

alcoholism and divorce are among the highest in the world.

The national anthem is full of melancholy, cataloguing most of the great failures and tragedies of Hungarian history. From the defeat by the Turks at the battle of Mohacs in 1526, commemorated every year, to the Treaty of Trianon in 1920, which saw Hungary lose two-thirds of its territory, Hungarian consciousness is filled with a sense of loss.

In fact, the picture is not all gloomy. While unemployment and inflation are taking their toll, and prices of fuel

and other staples leapt at the start of the month, the country is one of the most advanced in Eastern Europe. Foreign investment has poured in and Hungary is poised to enter the European Union in perhaps five years' time.

The Optimists' Club, which claims to have 1,000 members, has decided to reverse the despondent trend with monthly meetings. "Politicians drill pessimism into the people," said Peter Berek, its spokesman. "If only there were one politician who was encouraging."

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August Strindberg's *Dance of Death*, with John Neville and Gemma Jones, goes on stage at the Almeida
OPENS: Tuesday
REVIEW: Thursday

HILARY FINCH

Would the reintroduction of an ancient species in Scotland be a mistake? □ The small family of man □ Flying airliners in formation



THE release of eight wolves in Yellowstone National Park in the Rocky Mountains of the United States is a landmark for conservationists, who argue that a wilderness without its wildest creature is a poor sort of place. Eight wolves rounded up in western Alberta had been waiting the outcome of the latest of a series of court battles before their release last week.

For the moment, they remain in a large pen acclimatising for a month before being given complete freedom, the court permitting. Another four wolves are to be released directly into a wilderness area in central Idaho.

The rhetoric that greeted their reintroduction to Yellowstone would have sounded strange to the American pioneers, who did their best to slaughter wolves. "This is a day of redemption and a day of hope," the Interior Secretary, Bruce Babbitt, said. "There is room in the West for cattle and cowboys, for grizzlies and wolves, for salmon and cut-throat trout."

Wolves may roam Rhum



SCIENCE BRIEFING
Nigel Hawkes

The release is a fascinating experiment, which might be followed up in Britain. Under the European Union's Species and Habitats Directive, the Government has to examine the possibility of returning lost species to their natural environment. We British, no slouches at exterminating wildlife, knocked off our last wolf in 1743.

The most likely new home for the wolf is the Isle of Rhum, off the west coast of Scotland. It would be a lot less controversial to release the creatures there than on the mainland, even though farmers

fear they might swim the channel to Scotland proper and start preying on sheep. Very unlikely, retorts Derek Yalden, of the University of Manchester, a friend of the wolf.

A long-term study on Isle Royale National Park, in Lake Superior, has shown that wolves would certainly alter the ecosystem if they were released on Rhum, and in ways that are not immediately obvious. For example, the study shows that one important beneficiary is the trees, mostly balsam firs on Isle Royale.

The health of the trees is largely

determined by the number of moose, which graze on them. Many moose make weak trees, because they eat the foliage and suppress growth. But when wolves are plentiful, the moose numbers are reduced by predation and the trees do well.

The result has implications for the way ecosystems work. There are two theories. One says that the number of plants at the base of the food chain determines the population of all other creatures; this is the classical view, to be found in the textbooks. Alas, it does not seem to work on Isle Royale.

There, say Rolf Peterson and Brian McLaren, of the Michigan Technological University, "top-down" regulation seems to apply. The productivity of the ecosystem is determined by its top predator.

Would this work on Rhum? It has lots of deer for the wolves to eat, but too few trees, and it is small, only a fifth the size of Isle Royale. When wolves were released on a small island in Alaska, they saw off the resident sickle deer, turned in desperation to rats and birds and eventually to eating each other. That isn't at all what the conservationists had in mind.

Survival



WAS mankind once as endangered as the mountain gorilla is today? That is the claim made by some anthropologists, based on studies that show just how small is the genetic variation between different members of the human race.

We may think that we are all very different, but our genes tell a different story. Any two people from different ends of the Earth have genes more nearly identical to one another than do two gorillas from the same West African forest. The only reasonable explanation for this is that we must be descended from relatively few ancestors. Suppose that an ancient population of 100,000 humans suffered a catastrophe that reduced their numbers to about 10,000, from which they painfully recovered.

This "genetic bottleneck" would mean that we would all share a limited number of genetic varia-

tions. Analysis of genetic diversity, carried out principally by Naoyuki Takahata, of the Graduate University for Advanced Studies in Japan, and his collaborator Jan Klein, has shown what the population was when the "genetic squeeze" took place. Their conclusion, reported in *Science*, is that some time between 400,000 and 800,000 years ago populations fell to 10,000 and stayed at that level until about 12,000 years ago, when the great expansion began.

On the wing



HERE is a novel way to cut congestion in the air. Dr Lloyd Jenkinson, of Loughborough University, says that we should borrow a technique from flights of geese and fly planes in close formation.

The idea of crossing the Atlantic wing-tip to wing-tip may seem the faint-hearted, but not Dr Jenkinson. He says that the aircraft should be linked together electronically, and controlled by

the leader. Then every movement of the leading plane would be faithfully mimicked by its partners and air traffic control would be able to treat them as a single aircraft. Civil aircraft are usually separated by four miles.

Why not just build bigger aircraft? We could, but they would need new airfields. Two 400-seaters in convoy would also have safety advantages. One might crash, costing 400 lives. But it is unlikely that both would, so the toll would be less than a super-jumbo with 800 seats.

There is also the matter of drag. Geese fly in convoy because it gives them lower drag, the air disturbed by the leader reducing drag on the followers, like the *peloton* in the Tour de France. Experiments with real aircraft show a 10 per cent fuel saving from formation flying.

What about landing and take-off? These would have to be done in convoy, too, or the advantages would be lost. It may seem a far-fetched notion, but Dr Jenkinson is serious, and so is the university. It has patented the idea and is looking for industrial partners to help to exploit it.

Another giant step for mankind?

Europe and America may combine to revisit the surface of the Moon to unlock its secrets, says Martin Ince

Since Apollo 17 left the Moon in December 1972, lunar exploration has become a neglected art. But now plans for a return to the Moon, at first by machines and perhaps later by people, are being made in Europe and the United States.

One of the few of President Reagan's Strategic Defence Initiative projects to have come to fruition is Clementine, a space mission designed to test technology for spacecraft operations in high radiation environments — like those beyond the Earth, or during a nuclear war.

Clementine cost only \$55 million (£36.6 million), plus \$20 million for its launch rocket. It also took only two years to get from concept stage to its launch in January 1992. And without touching the surface of the Moon, it added a vast amount to our knowledge of the lunar surface.

For the lunar scientists, the joy of Clementine is that it became the first spacecraft of the microchip era to go to the Moon. Despite weighing only 230kg, it was able to send home two million images of



The Moon footprint left by Neil Armstrong in 1969

the Moon, in visible and infrared light, in 71 days in lunar orbit, as well as detailed laser measurements of the Moon's shape.

This data has renewed debate on the internal composition of the Moon, and on the history of its surface. The Earth is geologically active and its surface is comparatively recent, but the face of the Moon tells us about the early days of our solar system, making it a valuable laboratory for fundamental science.

Colin Pillinger, of the Open University's planetary sciences unit, who worked with

Apollo Moon rock in the early 1970s, is completing a paper on possible follow-ups to Clementine which he will present at a conference supported by the European Space Agency (ESA) and Nasa, of the United States, in April.

"It is now possible to do good science about the Moon as well as on the Moon, and to think about what would be involved in using the Moon for human habitation," he says.

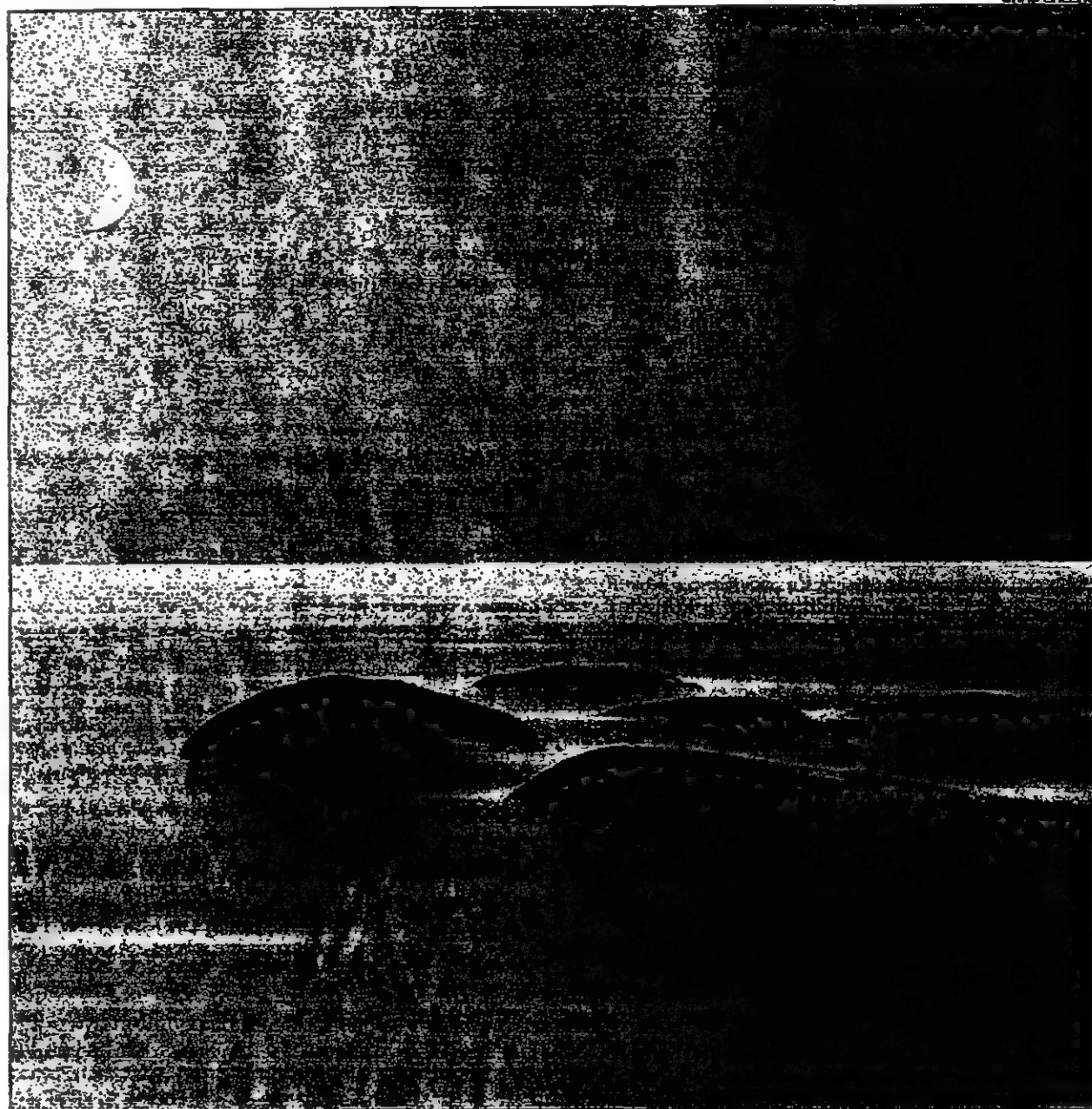
Science on the Moon might include using it as a site for giant telescopes in calm, airless surroundings. But Professor Pillinger is more excited by the prospect of instruments capable of carrying out scientific investigations in near-laboratory conditions on the Moon.

He and colleagues have designed a chemical laboratory for a planned ESA mission called Rosetta, which is intended to visit the surface of a comet in about the year 2011. In the meantime, a similar instrument could be sent to the Moon to check out contested reports of the presence of water in shaded valleys. That water would be vital for possible lunar colonists, says Professor Pillinger.

In addition, chemical analysis would show whether such water had come from the Moon's interior or been deposited there from outer space. This would allow an insight into the development of the solar system which is impossible from Earth-based science.

Professor Pillinger points out that Apollo rock, plus samples retrieved by three probes from the former Soviet Union, have been supplemented in recent years by 13 meteorites found on the Earth which have been shown to be of lunar origin. This means, he says, that there is little point collecting more and bringing them back to Earth. Sending machines on to the Moon's surface or into Moon orbit to analyse what is beneath, with knowledge backed up by our existing hoard of lunar samples, is the more promising approach.

The ESA seems to agree



The Moon pictured from the Earth — its surface could give scientists invaluable information about the solar system

with him, since its present lunar programme involves using just such landers and orbiters to open European exploration of the Moon. Thereafter, European scientists might oversee lunar experiments via "telepresence", by which Earth-bound scientists could use video links to examine samples and carry out experiments on the Moon. Only well into the 21st century would there be the construction of lunar bases. Its programme has no precise timescale and is not cosied.

One dissident from this view of the way ahead is Michael O'Hara, now a distinguished research professor at the University of Wales College of Cardiff and until 1974 a Principal Investigator with Apollo. Professor O'Hara says that there is still "a huge amount to discover" on the Moon but argues that the rate of progress of lunar samples has been slow because there have been no new samples for scientists to work on.

"We have on the Moon an early planetary surface that from the oldest samples from Apollo are 4,490 million years old, and the solar system itself is only 4,520 million years old, only 30 million years more," he says. "This means that we have a lot to learn and there is still a lot of debate about how the lunar surface formed."

He praises the work of the Clementine instruments in providing new data on the composition of the lunar surface. And he is even more impressed with the altimeter readings, which show that the Moon's light areas, the Maria, are flat to within a metre over hundreds of kilometres, which illuminates the problem of whether they formed at once, from massive meteorite impacts, or in phases by lava flow.

However, he believes that fresh astronaut visits to the Moon are probably necessary

to get more samples of known context. Only one of the Apollo samples, he thinks, is from a location described as well as would be taken for granted in a geological survey on Earth. It was gathered by Apollo 17's Harrison Schmitt, the only qualified geologist to have visited the Moon.

Now, says Professor O'Hara, there needs to be drilling through the loose material of the lunar surface or a visit to a deep crater where the lunar interior is exposed. Professor

O'Hara concedes that machines are getting cleverer, and that people cannot be at their best "when they have a nagging worry about whether they are going to get back alive."

But even today's machines, he says, are less useful than a qualified astronaut, if only because "machines are only clever in the ways you remember to make them clever, while

people reprogram themselves the whole time."

However, if astronauts do return to the Moon, they will do so only after new generations of machines have been there first. There are considerable political and financial obstacles to even comparatively cheap projects such as Clementine. The UK and other European countries are reluctant to see new projects added except in the very long-term to the ESA's plans.

And in the United States, the new Republican Congress is doubtful about big space projects. Robert Walker, incoming chairman of the House of Representatives Committee on Science, said in his first remarks in office that he favours space projects that can bring in outside funding from industry.

Perhaps the most promise, given the success of their collaboration on the Hubble space telescope, lies in an ESA and Nasa joint Moon project.

The author is deputy editor of The Times Higher Education Supplement.

Hidden water would be vital for colonists

Sailing into a copper-bottom controversy



THERE can be few images more symbolic of man and nature in harmony than the sight of a yacht tacking against a stiff breeze. Below the waves, however,

there is the problem of how to keep hulls free of slime, weeds and barnacles, which damage the fabric, increase water resistance and reduce speed.

Until four years ago boat owners used to paint their hulls with the herbicide TBT (tributyl tin) to discourage growth of such pests, but it was banned after it was shown to kill oysters and cause sex changes in dog whelks. Instead they turned to copper-based paints with a herbicide additive.

But now these, too, are under suspicion after being detected in coastal waters, estuaries and lakes across Europe. Studies for the National Rivers Authority have found traces in waters and sediments along

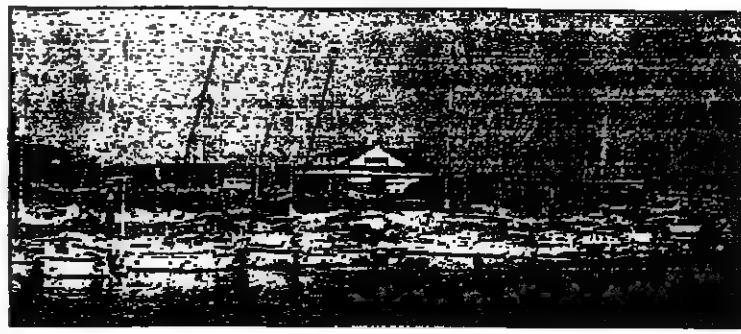
A herbicide used to treat the underside of boats has stirred new fears about

marine safety, says Nick Nuttall

the South Coast. Concentrations of up to 0.6 micrograms per litre were detected in the Portsmouth areas and in the Medway and Hamble estuaries which are both close to busy marinas.

Ciba Geigy, the Swiss-based agrochemical company which makes the herbicide called Irgarol 1051, insists that at the levels being detected the chemical is harmless to fish and man.

Professor Fauzi Mantoura of the Plymouth Marine Laboratory, part



of the Natural Environment Research Council, is not convinced. His fear is that the chemical may be killing small algal organisms on which shellfish and other marine creatures depend.

Irgarol is known as a triazine herbicide similar to atrazine and simazine, two chemicals which were once used as weedkillers and banned for non-agricultural uses after they were found to be contaminating boreholes used for drinking water.

The way triazine chemicals broke

down in soil was reasonably well understood, says Professor Mantoura, but their persistence in the marine and freshwater environments was less clear. "The degenerative pathways may be very different in water than in soils," he says.

Scientists at the National Chemicals Inspectorate in Sweden, where the chemical has been found in marinas near Gothenburg, have found that it can accumulate in fish and degrades very slowly in seawater.

Big tankers and navy ships were exempted from the ban on TBT, but there is growing pressure for these vessels to switch to alternatives. Professor Mantoura says: "We will undoubtedly see increased amounts. Research is desperately needed on the distribution and environmental effects, especially in estuaries."

Not everyone is so worried. Dr James Readman, of the International Atomic Energy Agency's marine environment laboratory in Monaco, believes Irgarol's toxicity is not as damaging as the coating chemicals it has helped to replace. This is despite the fact that he has found levels of up to 1.7 micrograms near exclusive marinas on the Côte d'Azur.

The best hope for the marine environment is that technological advance renders the copper paints redundant. Already US Navy scientists in Washington have identified a coating which is smoother than Teflon, making it virtually impossible for anything to stick to the surface.

In The Times Educational Supplement this week, a 20-page School Management Update includes a survival guide for primary schools facing inspection.

Teachers and Governors talk frankly about their inspection experience and we distil their advice for the benefit of all those facing inspection.

The TES. This Friday.

SCHOOL MANAGEMENT UPDATE

YOU CAN'T AFFORD TO IGNORE IT.

Repent, oh sordid sons of Sundon

A vicar's wrath with his village was no more than gospel truth

The photographs of the vicar of Sundon, Bedfordshire, were all printed rather small. Still, I may have one blown up into a poster, dog-eared and all. The Reverend Stephen Pullan is my pin-up for the week. Even though, unfortunately, he now seems to be backing down from the high, magnificent stance he took in last week's parish magazine.

Irritated at low attendance, he wrote that "a complete ignorance of the things of God unites 95 per cent of the parish, who live out their sordid little lives without any reference to God". Now he is trying to tell us that the fuss is all stirred up by the press, and that he did not mean to insult anyone.

Poppycock, vicar! Hang on in there. All you did, after all, was to attempt a bit of proper ecclesiastical thundering and shock the parish awake. It ought to be a bonus that you shocked the nation instead. Wesley, who dismissed the parish of Sundon as "a very quiet and very stupid people", would have loved such a platform. He would not have been put off by villagers whining to reporters that the vicar is a "cheeky beggar".

Well, no. That's the point. Gerald got Rainered for calling his own product rude names. Stephen Pullan implied the opposite: that the "things of God" are lovely, wise and transcendent, and that those who muddle on from day to day, getting and spending, are sordid. Their lives are... to select for random from the list of linked meanings: the word has carried on the way from Latin to here, "base, mean, ignoble, coarse, inferior, squalid, selfish, influenced only by mercenary considerations". The housewives of Sundon may have taken offence at the implication of dirtiness, but that is the least of this fine word's meanings. The vicar is in tune with Cardinal Manning: "All men of the world are sordid."

The phrase was good, too. The accusation of having a "sordid little life" probably hits a more raw nerve today than at any other time in history. For, now that so many of us have given up on the afterlife, we are very touchy about whether we are making the most of our earthly one. The phrases of the age are "quality of life", "live life to the full", and "lifestyle". The worst insult is "Get a life!" We pore over newspaper, day-in-the-life of celebrities, and wonder whether we would do better

if we moved to the country, went to the gym, or dressed only in white and ate raw celery like Lesley Kenton. We agonise at tedious length over the dilemmas facing working mothers. We scheme to get a few extra years, then worry about whether we will enjoy them.

Meanwhile, we are unconsciously aware that our daily lives are a bit short on intimations of immortality. So we seize on anything which promises a quick glimpse of the Beyond: it could be sex and drugs and rock 'n' roll, an exercise adrenalin high, a dose of sloppy diluted Buddhism, a mantra, an isolation tank; it could just be a short-lived hysterical crusade about veal calves, or Clause Four. Anything to disguise from ourselves the fact that secretly, most of us are afraid that we do indeed lead "sordid little lives".

From our Gradgrind approach to education as solely a means to qualifications, we pass to an anxious adult obsession with money and security; then to an old age when we become not wise tribal chiefs, leading the young towards a unified, glorious vision of creation, but worshipping "pensioners" — once again defined primarily by our income. Sordid, or what?

Of course, even without church there are escape routes into transcendence and pure, surprised joy. They may come through art or literature, altruism, scholarship, or travel to less sordid cultures than our own. Parenthood brings moments of great and mysterious meaning to life; especially early parenthood (it gets a bit sordid again later on). For some people, contact with animals is the quickest way to connect with the spirit of the universe; for others, gardening does the trick. They undergo the nearest thing to a religious experience: they can manage by going on their knees in the damp soil, fostering new life.

So accuse us of "sordid little lives" at your peril, vicar. The reason we get so cross is that we know they are sordid. We are all, when we can spare time from the mean, coarse, squalid, selfish business of getting through the day, looking for a way out and up. We need reminding to keep at it: hence my choice of pin-up.

However, the Church of England could do itself a favour by accompanying such bracing criticism with a bit of self-examination. Why, do you suppose, does it occur to so few of us, as we search for something Else, to try looking for it in church?

LIBBY PURVES



Rich pickings in Edinburgh — a scene from *Shallow Graves*, the hit film which shows how close respectable New Town lies to death-threats and torture in the underworld

The film *Shallow Graves* is about murder, betrayal, fear, suspicion and dismemberment. Its setting is perfect: Edinburgh. Where else do violent crime and utter respectability sit so closely together?

The instant popularity of this low-budget thriller, in which a trio of young people living in a spacious New Town flat find their fourth lodger dead from a drug overdose with a suitcase of money beneath his bed, owes something to its solid neo-classical setting. The breaking of kneecaps, the torture by drowning, the death-threats by Black and Decker drill — they may be run of the mill, but the brutal, in *Shallow Graves*, they have added piquancy.

Edinburgh has always been a two-faced city, "held in the grip of a dual identity", as Allan Massie described it in his recent book, "respectable and God-fearing on the one hand, rebellious and scornful in its debauchery on the other". Its delightful hypocrisy was neatly encapsulated in Mrs Dora Noyce's brothel in Danube Street, set in a most refined part of town down by the Water of Leith, where, behind the 18th-century facade, young ladies entertained gentlemen in ways never dreamt of in Morning-side.

The brothel closed barely ten years ago, and was said to have done brisk business during the visits of American ships to the Port of Leith, and meetings of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland when Edinburgh is full of ministers of the Kirk. The residents complained from time to time, not particularly on moral grounds, but because of the noise of late-night taxis and the effect on

The capital of Jekyll and Hyde

Genteel Edinburgh has always lived comfortably with its underworld. Now a hit film focuses on its piquant double standards, says Magnus Linklater



property prices. Prostitution has always flourished in this city of lawyers and clerics. One calculation in 1842 had it that there were about 200 brothels in the New Town alone.

The history of Edinburgh's underworld reaches back a long way. It is synonymous with characters like Deacon Brodie, the 18th-century personification of Edinburgh respectability, a town councillor and cabinet-maker by day who formed a gang of burglars and roamed the streets by night, carrying out a series of daring break-ins. Caught and condemned to death, he was hanged on a gallows of his own construction. Robert Louis Stevenson was so fascinated by Brodie's character that he based his story, *Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*, on his double life.

There is still, in the dark wynds of the Cowgate, in the depths of the Old Town, a whiff of the sinister side of

Edinburgh's past, when the Irish immigrants Burke and Hare, commissioned to find bodies for the anatomy lessons of Dr Robert Knox at the Royal College of Surgeons, graduated from robbing graves to committing murder.

Perhaps because of Edinburgh's compactness, the professional and the criminal classes have often brushed shoulders. At no time was this more evident than during the so-called "Magic Circle" affair in 1992, when rumours started flying about the behaviour of some judges and senior lawyers who were said to have been caught up in a gay scene whose existence was being suppressed by a massive conspiracy to pervert the course of justice. The investigation found no conspiracy, but afforded some fascinating glimpses into a lounge world peopled by rent-boys, dubious

lawyers and unscrupulous detectives.

Drugs, too, have been a basic part of Edinburgh's subculture for the past 20 years. For a time during the 1970s and early 1980s the city won itself the title of heroin capital of Europe, and something of the viciousness of the gangs controlling the drugs trade emerges in *Shallow Graves*. Since then, however, the use of heroin has dropped considerably, to the point where one police officer told me: "We have no serious crime problem linked to drugs." A decision was taken by Edinburgh's doctors to prescribe the heroin-substitute methadone and this has cut the use of shared needles to a minimum.

But drugs are, of course, still around. These days the front behind which drugs of various kinds are pushed is the network of saunas which have taken the place of Mrs Noyce's establishment. The sauna and

nice with the moral ambience of the city," as one lawyer put it.

But it is perhaps typical of Edinburgh that the real racketeering does not revolve around anything so glamorous as speakeasies or nightclubs. These days, I am told, the big money is being made out of old people's homes. The grumpy-farm business, where properties, bought up cheaply during the slump, have been turned over to become nursing homes or residences for old people, has boomed in recent years. There is a guaranteed income, either squeezed out of the old people or the State. The business is tightly controlled by a small number of unscrupulous property developers. It is unpleasant, wicked and extremely lucrative.

There is something of this seediness in the last scene of *Shallow Graves*, which shows the survivor of the trio lying pinned to the floor by a knife that has just missed his heart. One of his friends has been killed. The girl has fled the country, penniless. But he has survived. And he has the cash. He grins knowingly as the camera hovers in. Very Edinburgh.

When the protesters come out of their crates

Middle England's alliance with the malcontents over the misery of veal calves is a protest over its own discontent and powerlessness

MY father used to dread taking his children out to feed the calves in their sunless shed. It made us all anxious, that experiment with what was known as "baby beef" 30 years ago.

Father would keep up an uneasy monologue as we mixed the milk powder. "Mind you get the measurements right, or you'll make them ill, just like human babies. I'm not at all sure we should be doing this, it's so unnatural. It may be productivity, but is it progress?"

The calves weren't crated, but they were deprived of grass, light and their mothers, and we fancied we saw reproach in those big brown eyes. My father abandoned the experiment, and so did his friends. They were not what you'd call sentimental men, but they took a dim view of any farmer who ill-treated his animals.

Their anthropomorphism was hierarchical, however, like the animal kingdom itself. Having abandoned veal, many of them went into the other newish sort of factory farming, battery chickens. They were not entirely comfortable with that, either, but a chicken in a sweatshop is easier to look in the eye than a

calves, as Spike Milligan found, when he sat in a battery cage and squawked for chicken's lilt. The public largely ignored him; they, like the farmers, found they could live with improving the productivity of poultry (from 20 eggs per bird to an astonishing 250), even if it meant keeping chickens in conditions worse than veal crates.

They still can, which is why 85 per cent of our 34 million chickens live that way. There is something disturbingly artificial about this veal row that has sent the middle-aged law-abiders out on to the barricades with the yobs and fanatics. It isn't really about veal at all, is it? You can see that something peculiar is going on when you watch encounters between dairy farmers and the sort of normal, sensible townspeople to whom you might entrust your dog while you're away.

The farmer explains that calves are an inescapable by-product of the milk business and asks what he should do with them. "Kill them at birth!" screeches the Middle Englander, that proud standard-bearer of compassion, before going off to give what-for to a lorry driver at Shoreham, "who must expect trouble if he gets involved with this dirty trade".



MARGOT NORMAN

task while creeping about trying to establish that a mining company's plans for Madagascar were as wicked as he knew they must be. I never met Mr Lees, but I don't like the sound of him from the devastatingly backhanded "tribute" by his former colleague at Friends of the Earth, Jonathan Porritt, that appeared yesterday: he was notable for "principled positions

defended beyond compromise and, sometimes beyond reason: an aptitude for the tactics of attrition that would have done credit to the Vietcong".

Is this really how they see themselves, these demonstrators-come-lately who keep telling us they never so much as jumped a red light until ten days ago? I fear that, all of a sudden, they do. It is the democratic deficit that has suddenly got to them, and the conductive agent for that electric burst of indignation might just as well have been seals, or pigs, or horses as calves. The issue itself doesn't much matter, so long as it looks simple and generates strong emotion.

As one Edward Lester wrote in a letter to *The Observer* yesterday, it's a general malaise of powerlessness that links Disgusted of Tunbridge Wells with Bomber of Beaconsfield. "When did government ever respond to the voice of reason and moderation, or

the media give extensive coverage to a peaceful demonstration?" he wants to know. "Perhaps we should blame a selfish society that is only jolted out of indifference to misery by sensational action."

It might be about anything — the issue doesn't matter

That, surely, is the essence of the sort of anthropomorphism we are seeing here. It is not really a question of people looking at a crated calf and saying: "I know how I'd feel if I were in that crate." It is more a matter of people who already feel so powerless and disillusioned with the processes by which their lives are governed, that the sight of the crated calf gives them a sudden jolt of identity. That's how they feel themselves. In taking action, therefore, what they are emphatically not doing is trying to give the animal a life as contented as their own. They are merely lashing out as an expression of their own cratedness.

It may, therefore, be irrele-

vant that the veal row looks like being soon resolved. We can ignore the reassurances from the mendacious Dutch, who certainly cannot keep their promise to house British calves in groups, because they simply haven't the room. We (and William Waldegrave, the Agriculture Minister) can, however, take comfort from an unexpected quarter: the European Commission has produced a study which claims that banning veal crates and force-feeding of calves would have no appreciable effect on the veal industry's profitability, and more than half the advisers in the Commission's equivalent of an agriculture ministry are now urging a ban on both practices.

So what is next? The fur trade is flourishing again, but this sort of lightning does not strike twice in precisely the same place. Farmers, who worry that intensive lambing may be the next target, could be forgiven for hoping the malcontents' attention will be diverted by a nasty little pamphlet now circulating on how to sabotage construction firms working on the roads programme.

But surely there has to be a more grown-up way of relieving democracy's discontent.

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TIMES BOOKS, London

Matthew Parris



Penguins may dress formally, but their domestic manners are simply appalling

An early visitor to Antarctica noted: "They are extraordinarily like children these little people of the Antarctic world, either like children or old men, full of their own importance and late for dinner in their black tailcoats and white shirt-fronts and rather portly withal."

Your columnist, sitting on Paulat Island and surrounded by a colony of some 60,000 breeding pairs of Adelie penguins, could not have put it better, though I might have chosen for my own comparison a sanctuary of lightly pregnant nuns.

Paulat Island lies just off the Antarctic peninsula. It was here that the Swedish Captain Larsen spent the winter of 1903 in a tiny stone hut, after his vessel, the *Antarctic*, had been crushed by ice and sunk in the Weddell Sea. The remains of the hut are still visible, engulfed in a sea of their own: a sea of penguins, only 1,500 of which Larsen and his men had time to eat.

This chapter of our trip to Antarctica on a ship called the *Explorer* is headlined in our itinerary "Paulat Island: Erebus and Terror Gulf". I hope to be describing the whole journey in due course, but for the moment I am absorbed by those penguins. Let me disburse you of your penguin fantasies. You can forget any idea that penguins are cuddly or sweet. Penguin society is nasty, brutish and smelly. A penguin colony appears to combine all the worst features of an inner-city existence, without the night life. In the ocean they flash like torpedoes, underwater, dolphin-like and diving through the waves; but on land, where they must raise their chicks, and where they can only waddle in the most awkward way, it's another story.

A penguin's nest is made of stones, there being nothing else to build with. But where to build? If it's too far from the beach, life becomes a torment of staggering over rocks every time you want a cup of tea. If it's by the beach, however, a revolting and fearsome beast known as a leopard seal comes caterpillaring up the sand in the night and eats your children.

Seals are not cute, either. Have you ever smelt a seal's breath? I got my first whiff yesterday. A leopard seal's life seems to consist of lying about scratching himself with his flippers, opening and shutting one eye, yawning, breaking wind, then, when the mood takes him, eating a defenceless penguin.

Nor do seals designate what we might call a bathroom area. They just lie around, surrounded by the stinking remains of what they have just been eating.

If this were the contemporary life it would be excusable, but the seal demeanour offers no hint of the spiritual. I yield to no one in my opposition to the clubbing of seals, but I do not for a moment suppose a seal would have any qualms about clubbing us if he could.

But back to the penguins. If you build on a ridge, then icy winds rip through your nest. If you choose a hollow, then the first snowdrift buries your eggs. So what do you do? You copy all the other penguins, huddling together in a vast colony, claw-deep in guano, holding your nose, subject to what Tony Blair would call "shared community values". Commonsense and penguin instinct alike force you together with your fellow birds.

But you don't like them. Your shore life is spent stealing stones from other nests, or pecking at raiders in search of your own stones. Space is so tight and the waddlers are so ungainly that everyone keeps knocking everyone else over, or treading on each other's nests.

And the worst of it is that your land-vision is so poor that you can't even be sure of recognising your own spouse or relations. Exchanging desperate squawks in an attempt at voice recognition, you try to guard against teenage penguins from other families pretending to be your offspring and cheating you out of that throatful of regurgitated krill you were keeping for your own kids.

Overhead, the huge brown skuas bird cruises in search of unguarded eggs. When penguins sight one, they point up angrily with their beaks, the whole colony striking. Adolescent penguins ram-page around, fighting, courting by the outlying rocks (the penguin equivalent of bus shelters) or trampling over other families' nests. Nobody moves so much as an inch if he wants a pee. The stench is overwhelming. The hisses and shrieks of family and inter-family squabbles fill the air. Everywhere lies rubbish and the carcasses and skeletons of dead penguins. The scene resembles Britain during the grave-diggers' and dustmen's strike in the winter of 1979.

Penguins suffer the horrors of forced equality with-out the compensating pleasures of mutual esteem. Proximity without affection: a socialist lifestyle with Thatcherite values. "Most Adelie penguins live to about 14," our lecturer, Megan, told us: "but those who don't breed can live to over 20." I raise my gin and tonic to a glorious slow Antarctic sunset. And to those who don't breed.

Whatever people think, the old stereotypes remain true: the Tories are the lower-spending party

Of course Labour will tax you more

William Rees-Mogg

Conservatives were about to disappear from the pages of history, to be replaced by some new party of the right which would do the job properly. Equally, it is the business of the Labour Party to raise expenditure which benefits its constituency, and to pay for welfare by redistributing taxes on the middle class — the rich being not so easy to catch. If the Labour Party ceases to be the high-tax party, it will be redundant. If the respondents to the Harris poll are correct, both major parties are about to abandon their historic constituencies. The logical conclusion would be that a new left-wing party would spring up to fight a new right-wing party, and the next election would be fought between Dennis Skinner in the red corner and Teresa Gorman in the blue. That is not going to happen.

The conclusions of this poll are therefore absurd. They do, however, show how much political damage has been done to the Tories by the tax increases of 1993 and 1994. John Major is in the same position as George Bush got himself into. Major fought the 1992 general election on the commitment to cut taxes, just as George Bush fought his 1990 campaign with the pledge: "Read my lips, no new taxes." Both campaigns were successful, but John Major and George Bush both went back on their commitments. Each man betrayed his main pledge to his main constituency.

John Major had to raise taxes in

1993 and 1994 because government expenditure had been allowed to rise in 1991 and 1992 — on his watch. In addition, the deep recession that started in 1990 led to lower revenue and higher expenditure than had been expected. That worldwide recession was more severe than was necessary in Britain, because of high interest rates and the disastrous commitment to the exchange-rate mechanism. It was entirely fair for the American electorate to blame George Bush for raising taxes when

ducing the increase by a little bit. It was pragmatism which allowed expenditure to run out of control in the early 1990s: it is pragmatism which still refers to reductions in increases in expenditure as "cuts". The pragmatist always says "yes" to building the new tower block, but limits it to 18 storeys instead of 20.

Nevertheless, it is absurd to suppose that John Major would spend less, or tax less, than Tony Blair, if he were to remain Prime Minister after 1997. In my judgment, Tony Blair is as good a Labour leader as the country is likely to get. I think him honest, intelligent, up-to-date and quite tough-minded, well aware that overspending and overrunning could bring down the house of cards of a Labour government. John Major made terrible mistakes in the first two years of his leadership, mistakes which haunt him to this day and will haunt him at the next general election.

I also believe that Major has been learning from his mistakes, and is far more realistic and a much better Prime Minister now than he was when he came into office. Yet, Tony Blair (however good) and John Major (however mistaken) represent two different interests. One represents the net welfare recipients and the other the net tax payers. Under Tony Blair, welfare and taxes will both be higher: it is in the nature of his party and his job.

The British middle class is therefore entirely justified in its anger at the Conservative tax increases. If public expenditure had been properly controlled, the increases would not have been necessary. The middle classes are right to be suspicious of Kenneth Clarke's attitude to spending: when it comes to public expenditure cuts, he is a sheep in wolf's clothing. But it is a mistake to suppose that a historic reversal of the party roles has taken place, or could take place.

Of course, if John Redwood or Peter Lilley were Chancellor, the Conservatives would look much more convincing as the low-tax party. John Redwood is correct in his criticism of the failure of Conservative Government to reduce public expenditure in relative, let alone absolute, terms.

The same poll shows that almost exactly the same percentages, and probably much the same respondents, trust Labour to deliver a secure economic future for themselves and their families. Labour is ahead on that by 48 to 21, as against 9 to 23 on the tax battlefront. If the commonsense expectation that taxes will be lower under the Tories can be restored — and it is undoubtedly correct — then economic and electoral confidence in the Government are likely to revive. The Tories as the low-tax party are always hard to beat.

On European policy, John Major has signalled his change of heart, even though he has not yet welcomed the nine rebels back into the bosom of the party. Something of the same sort has to happen on expenditure and tax. The problem is one of regaining trust. I think trust may be regaining on the European issue; it is obviously still much further away on the issue of taxation, yet that is the one which is likely to decide the next general election.

Where do we point the finger?

Peter Riddell argues that the regulators of utilities are a political anomaly



In a Byatt, Don Cruickshank, Stephen Littlechild, Clare Spottiswoode and John Swift are not instantly familiar names. Yet they are among the most powerful hundred people in Britain, with a crucial say over vital industries and large parts of every household's budget. The five are the respective regulators of the water, telecommunications, electricity, gas and rail industries. They are remembered, if at all, when they pop up in the headlines, as in the current row over the number of stations which will sell tickets for the whole rail system.

The regulators are a modern version of Cromwell's major-generals, or of French prefects, with an industrial rather than a regional role. They have far more power than better known heads of executive agencies, such as Derek Lewis of the Prison Service. As Mr Swift, the Rail Regulator, has said, in most cases he cannot be told what to do by ministers. But to whom are they accountable?

Mr Byatt and his colleagues are a constitutional novelty created since the early 1980s. They are a very British response to the problem of how to privatise monopoly utilities on terms which would attract private investors while also safeguarding consumer interests. This has involved setting up regulators separate from Whitehall and with wide discretionary powers: policing the licences granted by the Government to quasi-monopoly suppliers such as regional water and electricity companies. This is to ensure that consumers receive supplies and that companies are financially able to provide services.

Yet regulators have been unable to escape the dilemma that caused these industries to be nationalised in the

1940s. They provide essential services, in which consumers have no real choice (apart, recently, from telecommunications). Wider social and environmental obligations cannot be ignored. It has been impossible to just to issue licences and let regulators monitor them.

Critics such as Dieter Helm at Oxford and Centro Veljanovski, who writes for the free-market Institute of Economic Affairs and the European Policy Forum, have argued that regulators have too much discretion. They have made policy, not just enforced it, and regulation has become personalised. Sir James McKinnon, the first Gas Regulator, often clashed bitterly with British Gas. But Mr Spottiswoode, his successor, publicly differed from him in her opposition to using money from gas bills for energy insulation and savings.

In general, the regulators have emphasised the promotion of competition, believing that other matters are for politicians. During the row over pit closures two years ago, there was a direct conflict between the Government's desire to give temporary help to British Coal and the independence of electricity regulation. Professor Littlechild, its regulator, backed a free-market approach which had encouraged the dash for gas. He resisted proposals to allow the extra costs of buying coal to be passed on to consumers. He crucially influenced the eventual compromise. Mr Helm argues that this system of regulation worked against longer-term investment needs. The Commerce and Industry Committee

argued that the regulator had not discharged his duties in a satisfactory way, owing to "over-reliance on competition".

This experience has produced alternative proposals. Free-market economists such as Mr Veljanovski have argued for a clearer system of rules, more transparency, less discretion and an enhanced role for the Monopolies and Mergers Commission. Regulators should leave social issues, such as provision in rural areas or to the disabled, to the politicians. From the opposite angle, Labour favours strengthening the powers of the regulators to take account of broader strategic and social factors. A recent Institute for Public Policy Research report, *Regulating Our Utilities*, proposed regulatory commissions, rather than just single regulators, which could include representatives

of major affected interests. Gordon Brown has proposed that regulators' powers should be broadened to take account of big pay increases awarded to senior executives of these utilities. Greater public control via regulation is seen by Labour leaders as an alternative to the expensive option of re-establishing public ownership, except, perhaps, in the case of rail. But Labour is torn between strengthening the regulators and wanting to give Whitehall back its extensive say.

There is already a danger of political influence on sensitive issues. Last October, there was a revealing exchange between Patrick Nicolls, a Tory MP from Devon, and Robert Atkins, an Environment Minister, over the water regulator's decision to limit price rises by South West Water. This ruling is now being reviewed by the MMC. Not only did Mr Nicolls boast that changes were pegged "only because of the efforts of Conservative MPs and because of the actions of ministers", but Mr Atkins agreed.

At present ministers have it both ways: giving regulators considerable discretion and reserving for themselves the right to intervene on occasion. In a recent speech, Tim Eggar, the Minister for Industry and Energy, rejected both free-market and left-wing criticisms on the grounds that the present system avoided being too legalistic and bureaucratic while preserving flexibility.

That, however, leaves the regulators in an anomalous constitutional position. Professor Cosmo Graham, of Hull University, argues that current worries over regulation are part of a wider problem of accountability in government. There is a need for more oversight, via both the MMC and a new Commons committee on regulated industries. Annual reports and occasional appearances before committees are not enough. New regulators, whether individuals or new commissions covering whole industrial sectors, such as energy or transport, should be subject to approval by Parliament before appointment. If the regulators are to remain flexible, they need to be more publicly accountable.

Mixed motifs

THE Tory party's winter ball next month will be a colourful affair, not least because of its tablecloths. The party has commissioned one of Britain's top fabric makers to provide more than 3,000 metres of a special bright blue chintz to drape liberally around the ballroom.

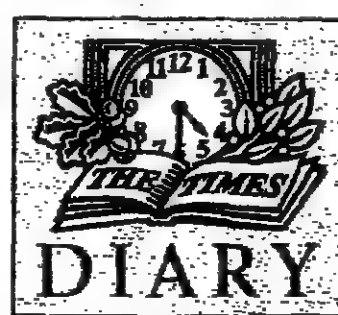
The material, called "Spangle", will go on sale this spring at £22.50 a metre. But I am assured the Tories did not pay the full £67,500

to the designer, Osborne & Little. No doubt mindful of Central Office's £19 million overdraft, the company offered a discount for the bulk purchase.

No fabric could better reaffirm the party's unionist credentials, just as John Major decries Tony Blair over his devotion plans for Scotland. Roses, thistles, leeks, daffodils and shamrocks are printed in abundance on the material,

along with lucky symbols such as shooting stars and horseshoes. "We were asked to do a 'Best of British' theme," says Sir Peter Osborne, the company chairman. "Ireland is represented by a shamrock and a heart; Wales with a leek, a dragon and a daffodil; Scotland with a stag, a thistle and a trout; and England with roses, acorns and a unicorn."

Sir Peter will host a table for 10 at the ball, where he will be joined by his son George, a researcher in the policy division at Central Office, who assures me he has not been a broker in the matter. What will



happen to the mountain of Tory fabric once the party is over has yet to be decided.

Rug rethink

THE House of Commons Speaker, Betty Boothroyd, was an unlikely sight at Camden's flea market, in north London. Yet I am convinced I saw her at the weekend surrounded by ethnic bongo drummers and haggling with a street trader over an £11.95 rug.

"Is it machine-washable?" she demanded. "Yes it is, my dear," said the stallholder. "Where are you going to put it?" "By my bed," "It will look lovely by your bed," said the trader. "Fine. I'll have it, just so long as

you say it's machine-washable," said our beloved Speaker, bustling away down the ethnic high street.

Max factor

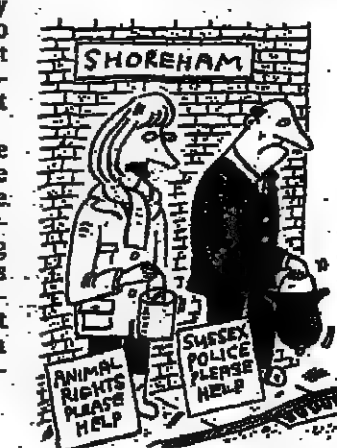
PUBLICIST Max Clifford is behind the weekend news that friends of the Princess of Wales are to be called into the witness box. They are being asked by the other side to give evidence in her High Court case over the sneaky leopard photographs of her work-out in a west London gym.

Diana is suing Bryce Taylor, the former owner of the gym where the photographs were taken, and the case is to be heard next month. Taylor's lawyer, meanwhile, is serving many of her circle with subpoenas to hear their side of the story. Loyalties may be sorely divided, but it all gave Clifford an excuse for a Groucho Club lunch with the lawyers on Friday.

For cod's sake

JOHN MAJOR has received a filip from an unexpected quarter. As he was trawling for friends among backbenchers at Chequers yesterday, fish-and-chip shop owners were praising his appetite. The forthcoming issue of the

Journal of the National Federation of Fish Friars reports, glowingly how he and Norma ordered fish and chips twice during the 1994 Conservative Party conference in Bournemouth. Place and chips and haddock and chips were delivered to their hotel room by Chef Fred, an outlet run by one Fred



Capel, who even received a thank-you letter from Major. "We understand the Majors have fish and chips delivered often to 10 Downing Street," says the federation's general secretary, Arthur Parrington. "If people bought fish

and chips as often as he does, we would know the economy is on the up and up — but it isn't."

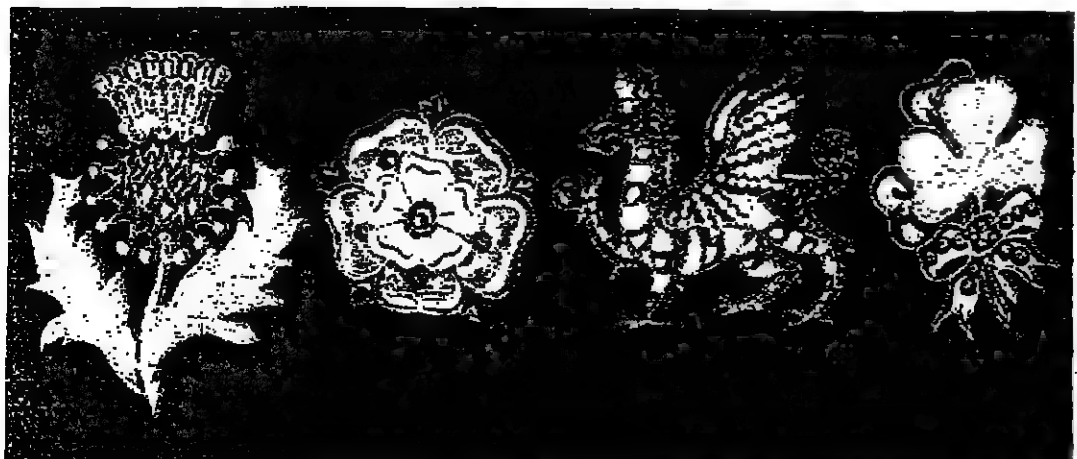
Sean Connery will be looking on with bemusement at Manchester United's £7 million purchase of the Newcastle striker Andy Cole. No mean footballer himself, Connery was approached by Manchester United in the 1950s with a £25-a-week offer. He opted instead to sing in the chorus line of South Pacific — for £12 a week.

The Hat fits

LORD LESTER's resignation from the Garrick Club on account of its attitude to women (the club won't have them) comes just as that great egotist Roy Hattersley joins the chauvinist institution.

Hattersley is justly proud of his election to the claret-soaked club where Sir Kingsley Amis is often to be seen eating his way upstairs after eating. "I am a new member," says Labour's leading luncher, "and I am not working or mobilising anyone to get women elected at the moment. But I believe that the Garrick should have women. If there were a poll tomorrow, I would vote for them to join."

P.H.S



Top-table designs: the symbols of loyalty are woven into the very fabric of the Tory party



LABOUR'S RAIL NAIVETY

Public ownership is not necessary to secure public control

The Government's plan for privatising the railways is badly structured, unpopular and ill-considered. Yet, to judge by the statement made yesterday by John Prescott, the Labour deputy leader, his party risks ceding far too much ground to the Tories and drawing attention to its economic naivety.

Mr Prescott, not normally a man of few words, uttered a simple, one-word fallacy when he declared that "Labour's aim is clear — to ensure a publicly owned, publicly accountable railway." That single word "owned" will be critical at a general election. Despite Labour's internal battle over Clause Four and the dogma of nationalisation, even the party's deputy leader seems not to have understood the essence of Tony Blair's modernising message: that public ownership of an industry is neither necessary nor sufficient to ensure public accountability and ultimate public control.

Mr Prescott's implied commitment to renationalisation is unwise for many reasons. The least of these is the one most widely quoted — that a Labour government "could not afford it", if Railtrack is sold off for around £4 billion. In reality, the Treasury could easily "afford" to buy back Railtrack. Renationalisation would simply require an exchange of one kind of financial paper — government bonds — for another — Railtrack shares. This exchange would increase the public sector borrowing requirement for only one year.

More to the point, a Labour government could renationalise Railtrack for far less than the widely quoted £4 billion. The value of Railtrack shares would depend directly on the rate of return to investors permitted by government regulation. If Labour chose to alter the regulatory framework and sharply reduce the prices charged by Railtrack, the company would immediately become much cheaper to buy back.

A sharp reduction in Railtrack's prices

would even be economically justifiable: one of the biggest flaws in the Government's present plan for privatisation is the decision to put an unrealistically high value on Railtrack's assets and then allow the company an excessive rate of return. The effect of these perverse decisions, both taken at Treasury insistence, will be to increase the proceeds from privatising Railtrack, but also to increase the amount of public subsidy the railways will require each year.

Labour could quite reasonably commit itself at this stage to cutting both the value of Railtrack's assets and the rate of return it is permitted. But if it did this in the context of a promise to renationalise Railtrack, it would be open to the charge of undermining Railtrack profits for the sole purpose of buying back its shares on the cheap. This policy would certainly be challenged by Railtrack shareholders as an unlawful expropriation.

If, on the other hand, Labour simply promised to revise the regulatory framework to reduce Railtrack's profits, but without buying back the company's shares, it would be acting well within the rights of a newly-elected government. It would be showing that it understood how social objectives could be secured through tighter regulation, rather than public ownership. And it would be giving formal notice to potential Railtrack investors that the profits they were promised by the present Government were by no means secure.

By sounding the alarm now, Mr Blair would protect himself from charges of bad faith when he curtailed Railtrack's profits after an election. He might even discourage the stock market from the present privatisation scheme. To turn the stock market into Labour's ally in scuppering an ill-conceived Tory privatisation plan: that might be the first solid victory for Mr Blair's modernisers.

A MISSION TO CARE

This is the year to pull out all stops for the Red Cross

They wait in emergency rooms or makeshift tents at football grounds, rock concerts, point-to-point and even protest rallies: on hand to cope with accidents, co-ordinate emergency services, help the elderly and comfort lost children. Red Cross volunteers give often, invaluable service, day in, day out. Often unnoticed, many times uncalculated, always ready to give their time without reward, they are all too often taken for granted. So identified is the distinctive symbol with care for the sick and the relief of suffering around the globe that the Red Cross is increasingly seen, like the National Trust, as a government body or even a branch of the United Nations.

It is not. It depends crucially on its volunteers. And the number coming forward to carry on the work launched in Britain 125 years ago is falling. Ten years ago there were 200,000 members of the 89 branches that make up the British Red Cross; today there are only 90,000, a precipitous drop of 55 per cent. The British Red Cross is, therefore, using this year's anniversary to make its true self better known. The campaign was launched on Saturday at a rally in Highbury Stadium, London, and will culminate on May 8.

The precise anniversary falls on July 22, the date when Colonel Robert Lloyd Lindsay wrote to *The Times* to express his horror at the carnage of the Franco-Prussian War and urged the creation of a British organisation to support the fledgling Society For Aiding In Ameliorating the Conditions of Sick and Wounded of Armies in Time of War — the precursor of the International Committee of the Red Cross. But by linking its own

anniversary to the National Commemoration of VE-Day, the British Red Cross underlines the continuing vital role it plays in war today, sending volunteers to Rwanda, Afghanistan and Bosnia, alleviating hunger, investigating torture and providing medicines and comfort to the victims.

This emphasis on the publicised role that volunteers play abroad should not obscure the pressing need still for the Red Cross at home. The organisation has been among the first to respond to disasters that have hit Britain — Hillsborough, Lockerbie, the Bradford stadium fire, the Clyde floods to name some of the most recent. Less spectacularly but no less vital, it supports the victims of domestic fires, trains people in first aid, takes patients home from hospital, assists rehabilitation, visits the sick and elderly, and lends wheelchairs and medical equipment to those in need.

This domestic work, with a yearly budget of £60 million, needs men and women willing to give their time and money. The Red Cross needs to do more to publicise its routine work. It must show that it needs to recruit not only doctors and nurses but volunteers for its expanding community care services, staff for its network of shops, people to carry on the original function of tracing contacts and reuniting families divided by war. The organisation works best when it works alongside professionals. But it must never let either government or professionals take it for granted. The Red Cross needs its own distinctive profile. *The Times*, proud of its role in the origins of and support for the Society, will do its bit to help this year. We ask others to do the same.

NO MAN HAS TO BE AN ISLAND

Fax softly, for you fax on our urban dreams

Remote islands have been topics for romantic escapists since there was civilisation to escape from. Those born on them have tended to be realistic, and escaped to the bright lights at the earliest opportunity. Our survey of the flight to the isles, published on page 5, describes how for the first time technology is making it possible to combine the romantic pleasures of remoteness with the economic and cultural advantages of the city.

For one thing, physical access to islands by light aircraft, hovercraft and (for Skye) a bridge is making their isolation less extreme. But the biggest change lies not in travel to the wild places but in communication. Personal computers, fax, television and the electronic superhighway are plugging the airway on the world's rim into instant contact with the urban world of business and information. It is becoming possible to earn a living from a "hellycotage" in the most isolated parts as an accountant, translator, copywriter or secretary for companies with offices anywhere in the world. So the computer terminal is bridging isolation in as revolutionary a way as the first sailors or the pioneer bridge-builders.

Paradoxically, the remoteness of islands is making their electronic communications better, because they have no alternative. Big cities have libraries, universities, museums, resident experts and all the other resources of the old learning. Because it has none of such things, the Isle of Lewis is creating one of the world's first computer universities, and is thereby linking some of the most isolated communities in the world with the most

modern education available anywhere. So now is the time for romantics to put their mobile telephones where their mouths were. It is revealing that those who have praised the romance of remoteness have seldom chosen to live in the wilds themselves. From Homer to Cavafy, poets have written about the rewards of travelling towards Ithaca rather than its insular life. Alphonse Daudet described the pleasures of living in a Provencal windmill and Compton Mackenzie of *Whisky Galore* from the comforts of their metropolitan clubs. A rare romantic who practised what he wrote, Robert Louis Stevenson, stopped writing insular escapism as soon as he settled in Samoa.

This modern escape from the rat-race to the fringes of the world where eagles soar and others play brings the dangers of the good life. Those whom Hebrideans call in-comers and natives of the wilder shores of Ireland call "blow-ins" may carry with them their urban tension. In the bossy way of suburban man and woman, they might start organising campaigns against fecklessness, lethargy, untidiness and other old insular virtues. They might even petition against metropolitan subsidy to the isles on the principle of Not Around My Sea Loch or Lough.

However, the romantic view is that the beauty of the islands and the ancient cunning of the islanders will convert them to a less frantic way of life. And if the beauty does not, the long nights and horizontal Scotch mist soon will. Romantic escapism depends on not actually being made to escape.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN Telephone 071-782 5000

Threat to end income support for mortgage payments

From the Shadow Minister for Housing

Sir, The most disturbing implication of Peter Lilley's article, "Case-iron home loans" (January 10), is that he clearly has little or no grasp of the impact of his proposals on the housing market.

After the ravages of the recession, and the unprecedented problems of repossession and negative equity, the housing market remains in the doldrums. Both existing and prospective homeowners are showing extreme caution about taking on new loans. Their caution is compounded by anxiety about long-term employment prospects, particularly when increasing numbers of employees are now on short-term contracts.

To make matters worse they face the likelihood of further interest rate rises and the reduction of Miras (mortgage interest relief at source) from 20 per cent to 15 per cent in April. Coming on top of all this Mr Lilley's threat to withdraw the income support safety net from homeowners in financial difficulty is the final ingredient in a lethal cocktail which will poison any prospect of recovery in the housing market.

Mr Lilley claims that private insurance will provide a painless alternative to income support. It won't. More than half the current recipients of income support are, in his words, "the more difficult risks" — such as relationship breakdown.

Furthermore the increased costs will, contrary to Mr Lilley's breezy claims, almost certainly inhibit new borrowers. An additional £303 a year in London, £450 in the South East or even £357 in the North West will stretch many family budgets to breaking point. These are the likely additional costs to homeowners in average-priced properties from reduced Miras and the increase in insurance. Of course the costs will be much

higher for people who are considered at high risk of losing their job. I would not even begin to speculate about the kind of premiums which Tory MPs in marginal seats might be asked to pay.

Yours sincerely,
NICK RAYNSFORD
(MP for Greenwich),
House of Commons,
January 10.

From Sir Gordon Borrie, Chairman of the Commission on Social Justice

Sir, Peter Lilley states (report, January 10) that the proposals of the Commission on Social Justice on welfare reforms would cost £7 billion. It is alarming for the Social Security Minister to be so inaccurate.

It is, in fact, impossible to arrive at a total costing for the commission's strategies because they are designed for 15 years rather than the usual five years of a parliamentary term; and because our welfare-to-work proposals would result in tangible savings and increased tax revenues by moving people out of the expensive poverty trap which Mr Lilley appears content to continue subsidising.

The commission has set out a number of more efficient and just uses for public money than paying to keep people out of work. The cost of introducing a mortgage benefit, for example, will be recouped by providing incentives for unemployed homeowners to move back to work.

If a quarter of a million families are moved off income support in this way, savings of £750 million could be generated. The Government cannot claim such potential for its own budgetary measure of cutting support to unemployed homeowners. This may be part of the Government's package of "savings", but it will add at least £30 a month to the average new mortgage.

Lastly, the Institute for Fiscal Studies, to which Mr Lilley referred at a

seminar of the Social Market Foundation, has not attempted to produce a costing of the commission's final report. The figure of £7 billion to which the minister refers is taken from one estimate of the likely investment required to achieve a number of the commission's objectives. He omits to say that a better use of the value of some existing tax allowances would pay for them, without the need for any income tax increases on lower and middle-income families at all.

Yours sincerely,
GORDON BORRIE, Chairman,
Commission on Social Justice,
Institute for Public Policy Research,
30-32 Southampton Street, WC2
January 11.

From Mr John Denham, MP for Southampton Itchen (Labour)

Sir, Peter Lilley is surely wrong to be so complacent over the abolition of income support mortgage interest payments. Of course, the insurance market will adjust and some new insurance products will become available. But ministers have made it very clear that they do not intend to introduce tight regulation over the sale of mortgage insurance products. It does not take much imagination to see what will happen.

The public will be required to pay through the nose whatever they buy. In 1993, premiums of £220 million were paid for mortgage insurance. Insurance payouts were £160 million, a 30 per cent mark-up to the insurers' costs and profits.

As Mr Lilley says, the cost of mortgage protection does not have to be borne by the taxpayer. But if it is cheaper, fairer, safer and better for homeowners, it might just be the best way.

Yours sincerely,
JOHN DENHAM,
House of Commons.

Relentless spread of the flatworm

From Mrs Elizabeth Platts

Sir, Far from having "just been identified as a major killer of earthworms" (Diary, January 10; see also report, January 11), the New Zealand flatworm (*Arctiosthia triangulata*) has been recognised in Ireland as a major killer of earthworms for over 20 years. Given the ability of the flatworms to live in virtually all soil types, and the lack of predators (their mucus makes them very unpalatable), their spread throughout the UK has seemed inevitable.

Modern agricultural practices mean that farmers no longer rely on earthworms for soil fertility, so their loss has been largely unnoticed or ignored. Like so many introduced alien species, *Arctiosthia* has had a free run and is unlikely to be halted now.

Flatworms are notorious for their powers of regeneration and stamping on them is much more likely to increase their numbers. Keen Irish gardeners have been known to collect specimens (which although pinkish when newly hatched, are usually dark brown to purplish on their upper surface, with thin beige bands along the edges of the flattened body) together with the egg capsules, and pour on boiling water.

Mature flatworms can extend to more than 10 inches and the shiny black oval eggs can be over half an inch — so they are not easily missed.

I am glad the Royal Horticultural Society is interested in the problem, but I hope it can suggest a more effective method of disposal than squashing.

Much more important — what is the effect of the flatworm on native woodland and grassland ecology? How long does it take for the earthworm/flatworm populations to reach an equilibrium? Or do the flatworm populations crash, making the eventual reintroduction of earthworms a feasible possibility? Please do report on this.

Gardeners can take some comfort: frogs and toads enjoy eating earthworms but will not touch the flatworms. So amphibians should be encouraged; they will now eat even more slugs than they do already.

Yours faithfully,
ELIZABETH PLATTS
(Editor, *The Irish Naturalist's Journal*, 1976-88),
Belmont, New Road,
Littleton, Winchester, Hampshire,
January 11.

From Mrs Eva Crowe

Sir, My garden is riddled with monstrous flatworms but I could not possibly bring myself to "stamp on them", as recommended in your report.

My slugs are offered a hopefully pleasurable end in the pots of sweetened beer dotted around the garden. There must be a compassionate method of dispatching flatworms (and, for that matter, earwigs).

Yours faithfully,
EVA CROWE,
1 Lodge Cottages,
Crown Inn Yard, Oxford,
Basingstoke, Hampshire,
January 13.

Gender extension

From the Very Reverend Canon James Cunnane

Sir, The state of Israel long ago provided for the needs of a third gender (letters, January 4, 11) in the cubicles where travellers were interrogated and searched by security officials at Lod airport. The entrances were labelled "Men", "Women" and "Diplomats".

Arrangements have since, alas, changed, but their memory fondly remains.

Yours faithfully,
JAMES CUNNANE,
Our Lady of the Taper Catholic Church,
Cardigan, Dyfed,
January 11.

From Mr B. C. Thomas

Sir, In the mid-1980s the Military Command Swimming Baths in Alderston labelled their changing rooms "Men", "Women" and "Officers". They may still do so.

Yours faithfully,
BRIAN C. THOMAS,
121 Kings Road, Fleet, Hampshire,
January 12.

From Mrs M. L. Donnelly

Sir, In Andover we do it differently. At our leisure centre there is a board in the reception office bearing the legend: "Male, Female, Pilots."

Yours faithfully,
M. DONNELLY,
9 Hillside Villas,
Charlton, Andover, Hampshire,
January 12.

From Mr Arthur S. Pook

Sir, Many years ago, when I was at school, we were taught that there were three genders, Masculine, Feminine and Neuter. (Grammar). There were also two sexes, Male and Female. (Biology). The two subjects seem to have become sadly mixed up these days.

Yours faithfully,
ARTHUR S. POOK,
5 Dundagh Village,
St John's Town of Dalry,
Castle Douglas, Kirkcudbrightshire.

Air cadet funding

From Mr Tom Brinn

Sir, Bruce Brandon's letter (January 6), I fear, damages the cause to maintain funding levels to the air cadet organisation. The Air Training Corps was never supposed to be the same as the Royal Air Force. It was born out of the nation's needs in 1941, and by the diligent efforts of its "volunteer officers" — who are in fact commissioned in the Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve — continues to serve the nation's needs extremely well.

I am aware of the respect which both military and industrial leaders have for air cadets. It is wrong to base an argument on funding by unfair comparison with the volunteer youth groups, whose activities are essentially recreational.

Yours faithfully,
TOM BRINN,
36 Craggyknowe, Hawthorn Park,
Washington, Tyne and Wear,
January 12.

Hidden treasures

From Sir Christopher Finnsent

Sir, Mrs Jenny Perry (letter, December 27) referred to the difficulty she has had in getting help from the Tate Gallery in mounting exhibitions of the work of Solomon J. Solomon, Claude Rogers and, in preparation for a show this spring at the Fine Art Society, John Dodgson.

Application for the loan of a work by the latter has been rejected. Yet the gallery's archives most surely contain evidence of the esteem in which Dodgson's pictures are held by people fortunate enough to have seen them in the past, and evidence also of the credentials of the currently intending exhibitors.

One may in charity think that an effect of uncatholic taste in administering the display of a heterogeneous collection with inadequate hanging room is an understandable thing; also that some amount of bureaucratic crassness is another, separate, understandable thing. But encountered together they are harder to accept.

Yours truly,
CHRISTOPHER FINNSENT,
The Chestnuts,
Castle Hill, Guildford, Surrey,
January 9.

Not word perfect

From Mrs Jennifer Toller

Sir, In nostalgic mood, I purchased today what I believed to be a facsimile copy of the 1942 *Rupert Annual*. Copies of the 1940 and 1941 annuals which I had previously bought were described as "authentic facsimiles", but the 1942 copy, which suggested that it too was authentic, stated on the slip cover: "Within the original publication... two stories, 'Rupert and the Wrong Present' and 'Rupert as Steady Boy', contain certain terminology that was acceptable at the time of publication but has been changed or deleted to bring it into line with present day sensibility."

The assumption of the publisher that so-called "political correctness" outweighs the importance of veracity has disturbing implications. Will the censor's pen be applied thus, in future, to material of a more erudite nature?

Yours faithfully,
JENNIFER TOLLER,
125 Victoria Road, Cambridge,
January 7.

Performance of surgical operations

From Professor Roy Norman Browne, President of the Royal College of Surgeons of England

Sir, The General Medical Council's code of conduct allows medically qualified practitioners to delegate treatment to other persons (report, "Hospital suspends nurse who operated", January 12), provided they are "satisfied that the person to whom they are delegated is competent to carry them out" and that "the doctor should retain ultimate responsibility... because only the doctor has received the necessary training to undertake this responsibility".

As far as surgical procedures are concerned, the Royal College of Surgeons of England believes that all operations should be performed by properly trained surgeons.

In those few circumstances where a surgical procedure might be delegated to a non-medically qualified person, we believe that responsible supervision can only be achieved by the presence of a properly trained medically and surgically qualified person at the operation — assisting or observing.

Furthermore, we believe that such delegation should be limited to a very

few simple surgical techniques, such as skin suturing.

The only procedure beneath the skin that may be delegated to a non-medically qualified person who has been approved by my college is the removal of a normal vein from the leg for the purpose of a coronary bypass operation.

Those non-medically qualified persons who do this procedure (called cardiac surgeon's assistants) must be properly trained and certificated and follow a strict protocol. The responsible surgeon must be in the operating room at all times.

We believe that the UK should follow the rest of Europe and make it an offence for any non-medically qualified person to perform a surgical procedure on another human being — even with their consent — if that person is not under the care and close supervision of a fully trained, certificated surgeon.

Yours faithfully,
NORMAN BROWNE,
President,
The Royal College of Surgeons of England,
35-43 Lincoln's Inn Fields, WC2,
January 13.

Worship in schools

From Dr Leonard Davis

Sir, Only a Tory former Education Minister, in this case Sir Rhodes Boyson, could emphasise that the importance of a daily morning assembly in schools is primarily for giving "discipline for the day" (report, January 6).

Dr Habgood, the Archbishop of York (letter, January 10; other letters, January 12), is quite correct in advocating the need for having less worship but of a better quality.

There are, too, universal truths and the widest possible range of rich and acceptable values found in other religions, many of which can be rewarding and profitably incorporated into the underlying philosophy which should inform the education of our children today.

Yours faithfully,
L. F. DAVIS,
Springcroft, 6 Olivers Close,
Bartley Meadows, Totton,
Southampton, Hampshire,
January 12.

From Mr E. W. Lighton

Sir, Your leader, "A Church unimpaired" (January 7), glossed over the practical difficulties of collective worship in schools.

I write as a governor of a reasonably representative mixed comprehensive school with around 1,200 on the roll, aged from 11 to 18. The only area which can house such a number is the modern purpose-built sports hall. All have to walk varying distances (some considerable) in the open, thereby bringing in much dirt to stand for sit on the floor in an unhygienic manner for at least half an hour.

In winter the heating, designed only for the background of those engaged in strenuous activity, is totally inadequate. With assembly and dismissal times, at the very least 45 minutes is taken from a school day already seriously overcrowded by the demands of the national curriculum. The hall itself is then to be used for a variety of sports activities with its floor soiled (at best) and often wet.

The Archbishop clearly recognises

that miracles akin to feeding the 5,000 are necessary to enable the pious resolutions of the 1944 and 1988 Education Acts to be fulfilled.

Yours truly,
E. W. LIGHTON,
11 Ryebank Avenue,
Coppenhall, Crews, Cheshire,
January 9.

From Mr K. J. Shorey

Sir, Many teachers and parents who value religious assemblies in schools will have welcomed the Archbishop of York's comments. The practical difficulties of organising daily acts of collective worship for all pupils in secondary schools are well known. One has to ask why adolescent young people should be forced to worship God so much more frequently than do those who attend church faithfully every week.

As a Christian head teacher, I am wondering whether it is right to require pupils to worship a god they neither know nor revere. Because I love my wife as well as loving Jesus, should I expect others to send her a Valentine card?

Yours faithfully,
K. J. SHOREY (Headmaster),
Court Manor School,
Spring Woods, Fleet, Hampshire,
January 8.

From Mr David C. C. Watson

Sir, Dr Habgood's claim that "schools do not create Christians" (report, January 6) admits of many exceptions: some of India's and Africa's finest Church leaders became Christians in response to Scripture-teaching at school. It goes without saying that their teachers believed what they taught.

Yours sincerely,
DAVID WATSON
(Missionary to India, 1947-70),
31 Harold Heading Close,
Chatteris, Cambridgeshire.

Letters should carry a daytime telephone number. They may be faxed to 071-782 5046.

OBITUARIES

SIR ALEXANDER GIBSON

Sir Alexander Gibson, CBE, founder of the Scottish Opera Company and its long-time artistic and musical director, died in hospital in London, following a heart attack, on January 14 aged 68. He was born in Motherwell on February 11, 1926.

IT WAS basically one man's drive and inspiration which led to the formation of Scottish Opera and that man, Alexander Gibson, conducted the new company's first performance, *Madame Butterfly*, in July 1962. For the next twenty-five years he was the company's artistic (1962-85) and musical (1985-87) director. When he resigned in 1987 he was given the title of Founder and Conductor Laureate.

This long career as an opera conductor and administrator, which started at Sadler's Wells where he was made musical director when he was 30, the youngest man ever to hold that post, did not preclude equal fame in the concert hall. He conducted throughout Europe and even more widely in America, where from 1981 to 1983 he was principal guest conductor of the Houston Symphony Orchestra.

He championed new music, but his special love outside opera was Sibelius, and the Finnish composer came at the top of the substantial list of recordings he made, many of them with the Scottish National Orchestra.

Alexander Gibson remained true to his upbringing north of the border, where he was educated at the Royal Scottish Academy of Music, Glasgow, and he was Scottish to the core throughout his life. His first experience of opera was when he was taken at the age of 12 to see *Madame Butterfly* at the Glasgow Theatre Royal, a prophetic experience.

After service with the Royal Signals from 1944 to 1948 he went to the Royal College of Music, where he conducted *Costa Rica* using an orchestra



— unusual there in those days when two pianos were the norm. He studied further in Salzburg (under Markevitch) and Vienna, and made his professional conducting debut at Sadler's Wells when he was 25 with *The Bartered Bride*. The early 1950s were spent between Rosebery Avenue, then the home of Sadler's Wells, and engagements with the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra. Gibson was careful not to be classified as an "opera conductor", but nevertheless he found himself as Sadler's Wells musical director by the time he was 31.

Shortly afterwards came the offer of the conductorship of Scottish National Orchestra, which after a succession of Central Europeans in the post wanted someone British at the helm. Gibson once recalled that he spent a sleepless night writing down the pros of such a move on one side of a large notebook and the cons on the other. But probably it was the Scotsman in him that made the decision.

He arrived in Glasgow determined that his operatic experience would not be wasted. Scotland heard little professional opera outside the Edinburgh Festival and Gibson, urged on by a number of compatriots in the Sadler's Wells Company, intended to rectify that. In 1962 Scottish Opera was born with *Butterfly* and Debussy's *Pelléas et Mélisande*, the latter a notably bold choice in those days. The start was a success and almost immediately Gibson was joined by a young executive who was running the New Opera Company from the Wells, Peter Hemmings, as the first general administrator.

The combination was an excellent one. Gibson, for all his charm and good looks, was basically a shy, unassuming man. Hemmings was far more able to argue in committee, to fight for money and push his ideas through. For the next 15 years together they were to see the reputation of Scottish Opera rise and rise.

There were memorable performances, among them Berlioz's *The Trojans*, a complete *Ring* and a famous run of *Costa Rica* with Janet Baker and Elisabeth Harwood as the sisters from Ferrara. It was Scottish Opera — and Gibson — which enticed Janet Baker onto the opera stage and turned her into an actress. Alexander Gibson was ambitious; he set his sights high and drew the whole of the operatic spectrum into them. He was also hard-working; about a third of Scottish Opera's performances were conducted by him.

The all-round success of Scottish Opera could not last forever and two events affected both its standards and Alexander Gibson. The first was the departure of Peter Hemmings to run the Australian Opera. The other was the need for the company to employ its own orchestra. The Scottish National had given marvellous service but was quite properly concerned that

the increasing length of the Scottish Opera season severely reduced its own time in the concert hall.

Impressive new productions were to be seen, including a number by the young director David Pountney. But there was a feeling that the new orchestra was no match for the old: some of the players had been hastily picked and there were complaints that Gibson's beat was not clear enough. To these he crisply replied that he was there to make music, not to beat bars.

In 1985 the board decided that a change needed to be made, despite Gibson's all-round public popularity and his readiness to espouse the avant-garde (he stoutly defended many of the more eccentric productions of the time). The first choice was David Atherton, but negotiations fell through and the post eventually went to the American John Mauceri.

After taking the title Conductor Laureate — he had already handed over the SNO to Neeme Järvi in 1984 — Gibson returned to conduct the occasional production. But a good deal of his operatic work was thereafter done in America, including Los Angeles (now run by his ex-colleague Peter Hemmings) and Kentucky, which was in the hands of another Scottish Opera alumnus, Thomson Smillie. His long association with the RPO continued with the recording of a Sibelius cycle and he had completed some recordings for CD of works by Berlioz with the orchestra shortly before his death. He also opened the English National Opera's 1994-95 season with a new production of *Tosca* in September last year.

He was appointed CBE in 1967 and knighted in 1977 and had a number of honorary doctorates. In 1991 he became President of the Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama.

His wife Veronica, whom he married in 1959, and three sons and a daughter survive him.

STAFFORD SOMERFIELD

Stafford Somerfield, Editor of the *News of the World*, 1960-70, died in hospital in Ashford, Kent, on January 13 aged 84. He was born on January 9, 1911.



AN ASSERTIVE and flamboyant Fleet Street figure, Stafford Somerfield spent a quarter of a century on the staff of the *News of the World*, taking over as Editor at a time when its circulation was declining from its previous peak. By strengthening the paper's investigative journalism and through his use of the memoirs of film stars and other figures in the news, particularly if there was some notoriety attached to them, Somerfield reversed this trend, giving the paper a more raucous image. This was reinforced by the *News of the World's* frequent brushes with the Press Council, which had caused to cause his methods on several occasions.

Somerfield's career spanned the latter phase of the era of the Carr family, owners of the paper for more than seventy years. He played a highly publicised role in fighting off a takeover bid by Robert Maxwell and he was still at the helm of the *News of the World* when it was bought by Rupert Murdoch.

His abrupt dismissal by the new proprietor in 1970 was the stuff of Fleet Street legend. Though surprised at the time Somerfield was philosophical about it: "That's showbusiness, that's the game," was his comment to waiting reporters.

Stafford William Somerfield was a Devonian, the son of a Methodist lay preacher. He was educated at Ashleigh Road School, Barnstaple, and his journalistic apprenticeship was on the *Express* and *Echo* in Exeter, and the *Bristol Evening World*. In 1934 he moved to Fleet Street and spent five years on the *Daily Telegraph* and a brief spell on the *New Chronicle* before the outbreak of war interrupted his career. He enlisted in the Queen's Westminster Rifles, transferring to the Gloucestershire Regiment in which he was commissioned and reached the rank of major.

After the war he was recruited to the *News of the World* by the then deputy-editor and later Editor Robert Skelton, a former *Telegraph* colleague.

over a drink after a chance meeting in a Fleet Street bar. He became successively foreign editor, features editor, editor of the northern edition in Manchester and deputy editor. Eventually in 1960, he was appointed editor.

At that time the sales of the *News of the World*, which a few years before had soared to more than eight million, were falling off. Besides expanding the paper's role in investigative journalism Somerfield encouraged the publication of sensational memoirs, two of the most controversial examples of which were the personal stories of the film star Diana Dors and one of the central figures in the Profumo affair, Christine Keeler.

Both these accounts (and others) earned strident, particularly from the Press Council, but Somerfield argued that such items were only a part of the paper which also contained more serious matter — he cited an article by the Archbishop of Canterbury in the same issue as the Dors memoirs.

On another occasion, however, Cardinal Heenan, then Archbishop of Westminster, withdrew an article he was to have contributed because of the Keeler memoirs. Whatever the controversy caused by Somerfield's choice of stories and his treatment of them, his editorial policy had a beneficial effect on circulation, and in commercial terms he was certainly a success.

When in 1968, the eccentric Professor Derek Jackson, a

cousin of Sir William Carr the chairman, decided to sell his shares to the highest bidder, it set the scene for a bitter takeover struggle which ultimately marked the end of the Carr family's long association with the paper.

Robert Maxwell, then a publisher and Labour MP with aspirations of Fleet Street proprietorship, made a bid for control of the *News of the World* organisation. Somerfield, by then also a director, sprang to the aid of the ailing Carr in fighting off the Maxwell bid. He wrote a long and strong leading article in which he coined the much quoted description of the *News of the World* as being "as British as roast beef and Yorkshire pudding". Rupert Murdoch then reached a deal with the Carr family which gave him control and provided him with the foundation on which to build his British newspaper empire.

Somerfield briefly continued as editor after the change of ownership but differences of view emerged on policy and the position of the editor and his responsibility for the content of the paper. Matters came to a head in February 1970 with his sudden and dramatic dismissal in a three-minute confrontation, the brevity of which inspired a journalist friend who had suffered a similar fate to inquire of Somerfield: "Why did it take three minutes, you talkative bastard?"

Somerfield left Fleet Street with a substantial pay-off and a consultancy contract and went to live in Kent where he bred pedigree dogs. He became chairman of the magazine *Dog World*, prompting the comment by another colleague that under Somerfield the magazine would doubtless adopt the slogan "All doggy life is there".

He had written a book in 1950 about the murderer John George Haigh, whom he had visited in the condemned cell. In 1979 he published a light-hearted chronicle of Fleet Street reminiscences, *Banner Headlines*, and in 1985 *The Boxer*, which reflected the other interests in his life.

His first marriage, by which he had two daughters, was dissolved in 1951. His second wife died in 1977, and later that year he married his third wife Perelith, who survives him with the two daughters of his first marriage.

KAY LONG

Kay Long, president of Avon Red Cross, 1974-82, died in Bath on January 3 aged 83. She was born on February 16, 1911.

AS A consequence of the trend for families to disperse across the country, many of the great family names of Britain's provincial towns have begun to disappear. In the West Country, one such dynasty was the Long family whose last patriarch in the area, Alderman Walter Long, was a Bath-based solicitor, a one-time mayor, an adviser to the exiled

Ethiopian Emperor Haile Selassie and a chairman of the local evening newspaper. His widow Kay Long was a typically conservative Englishwoman and an excellent organiser, who devoted her life to the British Red Cross and many other good causes.

Anne Catherine "Kay" McSwiney was one of five children of a Catholic landowning family from Cork. In 1928 she went to Bristol to acquaint herself with a branch of the family who lived in the area and also to study nursing. Five years later she married

Walter Long, whose dying wish she had turned, and made her home in Bath.

Walter Long was a senior partner in Tiley Long and Co (now Thrings & Long), a Bath solicitors practice. His appointment as the Mayor of Bath during Coronation year, 1937, made Kay at 26 the youngest ever Mayoress in the city's history. It also brought her into contact with a very broad cross-section of the Bath community. For instance, the Longs befriended Emperor Haile Selassie while he was in exile in Bath during the late

1930s, ensuring that his bills were met and smoothing his path with English bureaucracy. She also knew the late Cardinal Heenan when he was a parish priest in the city.

During the Second World War, Kay Long served with the Women's Voluntary Service. Afterwards she put her nursing skills to good use by working as a volunteer with the British Red Cross, becoming divisional president in Bath in 1948. Her husband, who had become a city alderman and chairman of the *Bath Evening Chronicle* in 1956, and she subsequently threw herself even more energetically into her voluntary work, overseeing a significant growth in the charity's volunteer strength. She was appointed president of Avon Red Cross in 1974.

Kay Long travelled extensively on behalf of the charity, working on its diversification into welfare work as well as its traditional role in first aid training. She was indignant at the Red Cross's introduction of compulsory retirement for volunteers at 70, but defiantly vowed to carry on: "I shall work as a driver, help with fundraising — anything they ask me to do, I'll never desert them."

She remained full of energy well into her eighties, and bought a new car only three months ago. She was also a keen rider, a familiar sight at equestrian events in the area.

She leaves a son and a daughter, Bridget Parker, who won a gold medal in the three-day horse trials at the 1972 Munich Olympics, and who is currently chairman of the British Olympic equestrian selectors.

PROFESSOR GEORGE SERIES

George Series, FRS, Professor of Physics at Reading University, 1968-82, died on January 2 aged 74. He was born on February 22, 1920.



GEORGE SERIES was an outstanding university teacher, leader of research, and college tutor.

Born at Bushey in Hertfordshire, he was a small child when his parents moved to Stratford Saye in Berkshire, from there he was a scholarship to Reading School. In 1938 he gained an Open Scholarship to St John's College, Oxford, but his studies were interrupted by the Second World War. He saw service with the Friends Ambulance Unit in Egypt, Italy and in Yugoslavia, where, characteristically, he stayed to complete his work although this delayed his return to Oxford in 1945. Then, in two years he took a First in Physics.

Always quiet, calm, courteous but incisive, Series had the ideal temperament for scientific research, starting with high resolution optical spectroscopy of the hydrogen atom and of ionised helium. His supervisor was H. G. Kuhn, with whom he continued as a post-doctoral colleague.

In 1950 he was appointed a Nuffield Research Fellow, becoming a university lecturer a year later. With Kuhn he modernised the optical and

spectroscopic experiments on the undergraduate practical course in the Clarendon Laboratory. He became a lecturer at St Edmund Hall in 1953, then a fellow from 1954 to 1968, when he was appointed Professor of Physics at Reading University.

In Oxford, after a demonstration of the Lamb shift in ionised helium as a splitting of the spectral lines, he applied the technique of optical-radio-frequency double resonance to excited states of atoms. An experiment on the hyperfine structure of potassium produced a "first", a determination of the nuclear electric quadrupole moment.

Wide-ranging research work then included studies of the coherent scattering of resonance radiation, light beams, "level crossing" techniques and resonance fluorescence, together with intensity correlations in double resonance

experiments. As Reading this work continued with theoretical studies and the application of tunable lasers to novel spectroscopic measurements. He published two books: *The Spectrum of Atomic Hydrogen* (1957) and *Laser Spectroscopy and other Subjects* (1968).

His research was recognised by the award of a doctorate of science from Oxford University in 1969, and two years later he has elected a Fellow of the Royal Society. In 1972 Series was William Evans Visiting Professor at the University of Otago, New Zealand, and his international reputation continued to grow. Between 1970 and 1975 he was elected to fellowships of the Royal Astronomical Society, the American Physical Society and the Optical Society of America.

In 1982 he received the Meggers Award and Medal of the Optical Society of America, and was appointed Raman Visiting Professor of the Indian Academy of Sciences, of which he became an honorary fellow in 1984.

For many years he acted as a governor of Reading School as representative of the University of Oxford and of Bearwood College, the Royal Merchant Navy School. He was an honorary editor of the *Journal of Physics B (Atomic & Molecular Physics)*. He is survived by his wife Annette (née Pepper), three sons and a daughter.

MEDICAL BENEFIT IN OPERATION

Medical benefit under the Insurance Act began yesterday, but at present it is too soon to say how far the insured persons have availed themselves of the attendance and treatment offered to them. The machinery is not yet in full work. There does not seem to have been any rush of patients for treatment by panel doctors, and in many cases the insured persons have not yet selected their medical attendant.

One doctor in a district in the South-East of London stated, in reply to inquiries last night, that he had not received the necessary papers until that afternoon. He had in the evening some 20 insured persons waiting in his surgery for the signing of their tickets by virtue of which he would be allotted to them as their medical adviser. This practitioner is one who has gone on the panel under protest and with the greatest reluctance, and he is accepting only those who were already his patients. There seems to be a likelihood of some difficulty in the City, as only one doctor out of 44 on the panel is resident there, though there are in that area five "lock-up" surgeries, which are attended for a limited time in each

ON THIS DAY

January 16 1913

Lloyd George's National Insurance Act 1911 covered manual workers and those earning less than £3 a week. The State contributed 2d, employers 3d, and employees 4d, weekly. The medical profession hated it and workers were not enthusiastic (preferring higher wages) day by the practitioners to whom they belong. The question has been raised as to whether the one doctor who resides in the City is to do the whole of the night work. In Lewisham there are 79 medical men on the panel, of whom only 29 are resident.

Doctors in various parts of London not on the panel are already being informed by their regular patients that the sickness benefit certificates of insured persons will only be accepted by the authorities if signed by panel doctors. Some doctors who decline to join the panel are treating insured persons for nothing, pending developments, and some

insured persons, not being able to discover any doctor by whom they would like to be treated, are applying to non-panel doctors. One doctor in South Lambeth had three applications of this kind yesterday from insured persons who wished to pay him his full fees. In answer to a question in the House of Commons yesterday Mr. Masterman stated that the number of doctors who have signed agreements to attend insured persons with the London Insurance Committee, and whose names have been issued on the borough lists, is 780. Some more names had been received since, and he understood that the number was now nearly 800.

In reply to inquiries they have received the Insurance Commissioners have issued an official intimation that all insured persons who are members of approved societies (except certain special classes, such as soldiers and sailors now serving) are now entitled to medical benefit under the Act, no matter when they entered insurance, or whether they have since been out of employment. The provision of medical attendance and treatment for those members who were over 65 years of age on July 15, 1912, and who are not entitled to medical benefit at the expense of the State Insurance funds, can be arranged privately, as before, by their societies.

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Sabatini rises to first major challenge

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Australian public unmoved by local dispute

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Tomba's style graces Kitzbühel slopes

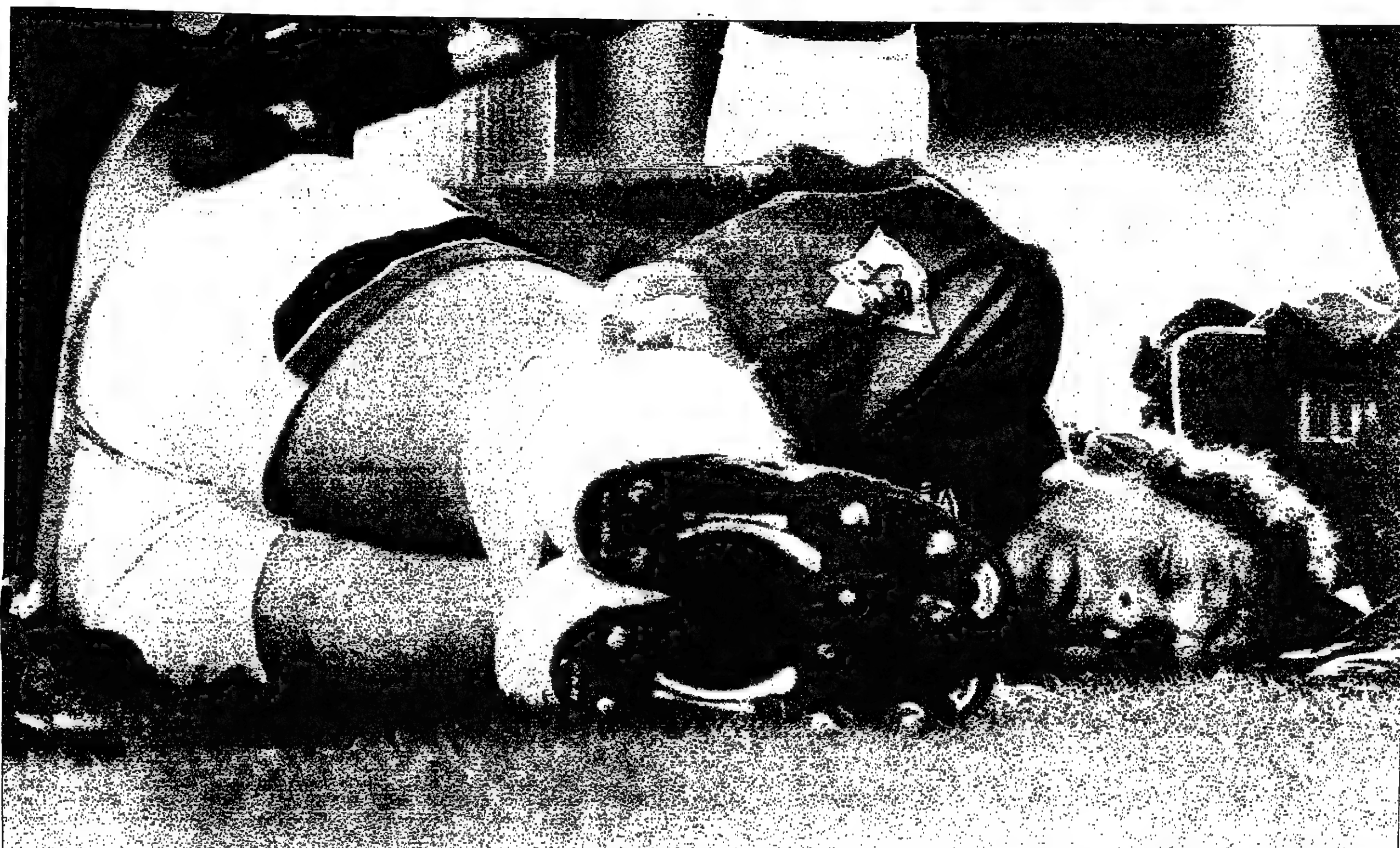
SCHOOLS SPORT



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Leading the field a cross country dance

TIMES SPORT



Hughes lies motionless, legs bound together, before being carried off on a stretcher after scoring the goal that put Manchester United ahead at St James' Park yesterday. Photograph: Raoul Dixon

Manchester United striker hurt scoring goal that earns draw

Injury fells gallant Hughes

Newcastle United..... 1
Manchester United..... 1

By ROB HUGHES
FOOTBALL CORRESPONDENT

SO MUCH raw emotion, so much money, so much for the price of Cole had flowed between the Tyne and Old Trafford, but come the weekend Newcastle United and Manchester United fought a tenacious draw that profited mainly Blackburn Rovers in the FA Carling Premiership race. Manchester United are now five points behind Newcastle 14 behind... and yet something closer to the bone, something that puts all the millions in football into perspective, happened in the thirteenth minute when Mark Hughes became in an instant the hero and the victim of all this frenetic chase for glory.

Hughes may well have scored his 110th and last goal in the red of Manchester United. He may be for sale as soon as he is fit, replaced — if that can be done — by Andy Cole. But as he stretched to score, so typically brave and spectacular, he did not have eyes for the late lunge of the goalkeeper, Pavel Srniczek, coming towards him feet-first, connecting with the studs on the inside of the knee. There was a sickening certiness around the place. The "geordies" have begun their crowd may have begun their afternoon pouring willpower, determination and support with their chants of "Kee-gan! Kee-gan!", but they know their football better than most.

The hush affected everyone.

You did not need to have played the game as daringly or as successfully as Hughes to fear that his pain and the collision had cost him this match and maybe many more. He was taken off on a stretcher, knees bound together, and the bulletin last night from the hospital spoke of a deep gash and suspected ligament damage. And after all that had gone in the week, the face of Alex Ferguson, the manager who had potentially replaced Hughes's thrilling combative style with the stealth of the £7 million Cole, was subdued not because his team had slipped further behind Blackburn, but because a servant who had turned last season's form with his magnificent goal in the FA Cup semi-final was now lying in jeopardy.

"The instant he went down, I knew it was bad," Ferguson said. "We didn't deserve a point today. There was a great show of loyalty from the players and the crowd for the manager [Kevin Keegan], you could see that, you could feel it. They were pumped up, we knew what to expect, but after losing Hughes, and having to replace Nicky Butt who had double vision, I was forced to rely on two men who were not fit."

Ferguson's captain, Steve Bruce, soldiered on with flu. Roy Keane struggled with a recurrence of a hamstring strain. And, though Newcastle responded valiantly around the leadership of Veron and the eagerness of Clark in the second half, it took a complete entrenchment of a Manchester team rebuilt around three centre halves to

last out the game.

"I knew the fans would get behind the team," Keegan enthused. "It wasn't for me, this is their club, they are Geordies, and what I most wanted to see I got in the second half: a response from my players. So, Alex [Ferguson] is happy with his point. I'm happy with the performance, and somewhere Kenny Dalglish is happier than the pair of us."

The Blackburn manager certainly must have enjoyed the first half, for with Newcastle tentative, with

Manchester intent on operating an offside trap, and with both sides intensely closing down in midfield, he was watching his main contenders run each other ragged without showing the form that Manchester will need this weekend when Rovers visit Old Trafford.

And yet, in that bitter-sweet thirteenth minute it had looked as if Manchester United were to take everything from this game. Keane had crossed the ball at an angle from the right, Cantona, who once again got off after a

petulant kick at a player, jumped out of the way of it: some thought it was a dummy, to my eye he did not relish the lunging tackle aimed by Peacock. In any event, the ball bypassed the pair of them. Hughes threw his body at it, connecting beautifully with the right foot, alas being caught late by the goalkeeper.

Perhaps it was that which depressed the atmosphere for the rest of the half. Perhaps it was the tentative nature of Kitson and Clark, who snatched at and missed three opportunities.

But as the prolonged half ended Newcastle twice warned that they had the fight for the contest. First Howey, with his left foot, mislaid the ball from only six yards when Fox, by now redirected into the centre, had won it in the air. And then, on the stroke of the half-time whistle, Peacock swung the ball forward. Kitson deftly laid it back, and Lee struck the top of the crossbar with his shot from 12 yards.

It became fractious, with bookings for Sharpe, Keane and Elliott for fouls in as many minutes. But after 67 minutes, Kitson forced his way into the hearts of the Geordie supporters.

He is one himself, he has lacked confidence since joining the club from Derby County, but now he was fulfilled. Elliott lofted the ball up to him. Kitson took it on the chest, was a mile lucky that it bounced back to him off the collar-bone of Pallister, but then was opportunism personified in driving the ball between the legs of Schmeichel.

Ten minutes after that Kitson, resurgent, rose to a cross from Hottiger, glanced the ball towards goal, and Schmeichel flicked it almost nonchalantly over the bar.

But late, very late, United had chances to win it. Keane had broken through, one-on-one with the goalkeeper, but Srniczek rushed towards him and saved with his legs. Then, Cantona struck wide with his left foot and lastly, after a breathtaking run from the halfway line by Giggs and a perceptive chip to the far post, Cantona stretched, connected,

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but propelled the ball right across the face of the inviting goal. "That could have won it," Ferguson observed, "but it would have been more than we deserved."

NEWCASTLE UNITED (4-5-1) P. Srniczek — M. Howey, D. Peacock, S. Howey, J. Beardsley — P. Fox, R. Lee, B. Veron, L. Carr, R. Elliot — P. Kitson.

MANCHESTER UNITED (4-4-2) P. Schmeichel — D. Howey, S. Bruce, G. Pallister, L. Sharpe — N. Butt (sub: D. May, A. Morris), B. McCarr, R. Keane, R. Giggs — E. Cantona, M. Hughes (sub: P. Scholes, 14).

Referee: S. Lodge.
□ Allen Tankard helped Port Vale to ease their relegation worries in the Endleigh Insurance League first division by scoring one of the goals in their 2-0 win over Tranmere Rovers yesterday.

Tankard, who risked a hamstring injury because Vale were without four other defenders, hit a 20-yard drive to give Vale the lead. Martin Foyle made it 2-0.

PREMIERSHIP AT A GLANCE					
	Played	Points	Goal diff	Recent form	
1 Blackburn	23	55	+34	DWWDWW	
2 Manchester Utd	24	50	+25	WDDWD	
3 Liverpool	24	45	+24	WWWW	
4 Nottingham Forest	24	42	+10	DWLWL	
5 Newcastle	23	41	+18	DDLD	
6 Tottenham	24	38	+6	WDWW	
7 Wimbledon	24	35	-8	WDDWW	
8 Leeds	23	34	+2	WDLD	
9 Norwich	24	33	-3	LLWL	
10 Sheff Wed	24	32	-1	WWDD	
11 Manchester City	24	31	-5	LLDD	
12 Arsenal	24	29	-1	DLDD	
13 Aston Villa	24	29	0	DWLL	
14 Southampton	24	28	-5	LDLDD	
15 QPR	23	28	-5	WDDWL	
16 Crystal Palace	24	26	-5	DDLLW	
17 Coventry	24	26	-19	DLDD	
18 Derby County	24	25	-5	DWDDW	
19 West Ham	24	25	-8	DLWL	
20 Ipswich	23	23	-10	DLWL	
21 Reading	24	19	-21	DLWW	
22 Luton	24	15	-21	LDLL	
Change	Up	Stayed the same	Down		

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Toon Army decides Kitson will do fine instead of Andy Who?



Keegan: responsibility

No winner on the field maybe, but only one winner off it. Only one Kevin Keegan, as the Gallowgate End would have it. Keegan was cheered to the grey skies when he took his seat on the bench and lauded the stars as Newcastle came from behind through a goal by Paul Kitson. For several days — since the news of Andy Cole's £7 million departure to Old Trafford had reduced the city to trauma — the mood on Tyneside had vacillated.

Good deal, bad deal: Keegan the Messiah, Keegan the Fool on the Hill. But the real vote of confidence came yesterday and, in the purest form of footballing democracy, was as unanimous as 37,000 voices could make it.

Like one of those Cold War spy films, the name had been erased from all files. In the club shop, all picture postcards of Cole had been

labelled "return to sender". Had they been able to scrub out the No 9 on the back of the player featured on the 1995 Newcastle Annual, doubtless they would have done that too.

Outside, the Toon Army had either gone soft in their old age or had to don jackets to cover up the black-and-white shirts. Only the centre-spread in the programme — a tribute to Cole and his 68 goals — and the odd taunt from the small band of United followers tucked into the farthest corner of St James' Park reminded the locals of just what they might miss.

That, and the words of the Toon Army song, "Andy Cole scores the goals". Maybe. But not for Newcastle United. Even the inevitable jeers which greeted the arrival of the Manchester United team contained more humour than



Andrew Longmore hears football democracy at work as Newcastle supporters vote with their cheers

hate. "Alex, you've wasted your money," rose one cry.

Cole was not at St James' Park to say his farewells. The police had advised against an appearance and, reluctantly, the most expensive pair of feet in British football had been put up on the settee miles away. He was on trial, though, in *absentia*. Was the affection merely as skin deep as the £50 Cole tattoo one supporter had emblazoned on his left arm a week before the transfer?

Cole's affinity with the North East had always been based on the goals which had given Newcastle a new spring to their step — like new

soles on an expensive but badly-worn pair of shoes. But he was still an outsider and, as letter after letter in the local newspaper pointed out, the club is bigger than any individual. The gist of the message yesterday was the same.

And Keegan's response was generous. "I don't expect anything else from these supporters. This is more than just Kevin Keegan or Andy Cole, it's about the team. The club is the biggest thing. They never once got in a grumpy mood. We were one down and had just sold our centre forward, they could have got us down, but they helped us back into the game."

Credit should go to Keegan, too. This was the first true test of his almost mystical relationship with the supporters and, except for the odd bit of bickering in midweek, the marriage has survived. He did not try to deflect criticism or share the blame.

He had taken the decision to sell Cole himself, he said, in the interests of making Newcastle a team capable of winning the championship. His programme notes were full of hidden meaning, praising Cole one moment, emphasising the importance of teamwork the next, a masterly piece of writing between the lines. Far from thinking he has got the best out of Cole, Keegan believes that Newcastle can become a better team without him and the fact that this season's championship challenge faltered when Cole was injured only confirmed his view

that consistency was the key, not individual genius.

Yesterday was the test of that vision and it might just be that, for all the sighing of Dennis Bergkamp at Newcastle airport, Paul Kitson will prove a perfectly adequate replacement. The crowd were as desperate for Kitson to succeed as the man himself. Every touch was greeted with applause, every mistake ignored until the diminutive striker, asked to go solo against Bruce and Palliser, struck lucky to slip in the equaliser.

"An important goal for him and for us," Keegan said, smiling at the understatement. The relief was evident for both. At the final whistle, the chants had turned from Keegan to Kitson and, though a point did Newcastle's cause no good, who knows how significant that goal will be in the long term. Andy Cole? Andy Who?

Australia's seniors avoid World Series Cup embarrassment with last-ball victory

Close finish fails to mask final charade

FROM ALAN LEE, CRICKET CORRESPONDENT IN SYDNEY

THE fraud of the World Series Cup competition here runs deeper than its grandiose title. Even the contents are not what they should be. The first match in the best-of-three finals is traditionally an evening of passion and partiality, but the 36,000 gathered yesterday were confused and restrained, not knowing which team to cheer and not wanting either to be beaten.

Australia, the first and original, won by five wickets against Australia A. It was decided on the last ball, but this was no thriller. Their pursuit of 210 was seldom in doubt until an uncharacteristic, freight final over, their superior class evident throughout and exemplified by the new

England Under-19 bowled out West Indies Under-19 for 168 on the third day of the first international in Port of Spain, Trinidad. England, who made 317 in their first innings, were 152 for two at the close.

bowling of Craig McDermott and the brilliance of Michael Slater's 92. Much of the cricket was spirited and some was of high class but, crucially, little of it was of high intensity.

However, one incident, the product of a misconstrued madness, a joke that went awry between players who know each other too well, landed McGrath before John Reid, the match referee, after an unedifying showing match. This, above all else, was the ultimate put-down for an ill-conceived marketing venture.

If the players had trouble identifying friend from foe, the vast majority of the crowd were in crisis. Should they

support the national team? Should they back the underdogs? Should they care at all? Most, it seems, arrived uncommitted and left unfulfilled. They cheered individual favourites and they applauded the unusual, but when Shane Warne came on to bowl, the regulation shrieks of adulation died away uneasily. Did they want him to take wickets or not? It was a dilemma few can have enjoyed.

If the bottom line of its judgment is merely revenue, the Australian Cricket Board may yet regard its dabbling with custom to have been an unqualified success. "Why bother I don't know," says a well-founded apprehension in high places when the final became an exclusively local affair and this soulless exhibition game can have convinced nobody that it is worth risking again.

England would never countenance such an idea but, just in case the present administration is overthrown and future boards consider it a bright scheme, he warned now. Do not be fooled by the near-capacity attendance. Every seat was sold before England proved unequal to the task of reaching the final, yet 3,000 ticket-holders did not show up, and many more had left long before the end.

The closeness of the match is also a deficit, for it brought only passing interest. Real excitement in such games comes from a nationalism that requires no supporting gimmick. Here, there was no nationalism, no fervour, no real point. But there were gimmicks aplenty.

First was the selection policy, which equated closely to the age-old practice of picking sides in the school playground. The interchange of



Emery, the Australia A batsman, is run out for four by Healy, the Australia wicketkeeper, at the Sydney Cricket Ground yesterday

players, insulting to a supposedly international event, reached its farcical peak when the senior Australians poached Paul Reifel, without whom the A-team would not have beaten England, and then did not play him. The chorus of boos that greeted the announcement of Reifel as twelfth man indicated that the people were no longer being fooled. And this was before a ball had been bowled.

The interval entertainment was appropriate. The unfortunate winner of an opportunity to hit a ball into an inflatable advertisement for a prize he probably did not want found himself facing the bowling of Plucka-Duck, the absurd, con-

verted invention of a low-brow commercial television show. Then we were treated to a band exhorting the crowd to join them in terrace cricket songs of terrifying banality. They were all aimed at supporting Australia, of course. But which Australia?

Taylor, the Australia captain, had been consistent in his doubts. Suspicious minds put this down to fear, for Taylor had nothing to gain but much to lose. Yet he is too genuine, too sensitive for this to explain all. Taylor squirms at being asked to beat his own kind, and he is right to do so.

Before play, Warne pointed out that the Australian side's usual pre-match meeting had

involved no discussion of the opposition. "There aren't any secrets," he said. "We all know each other's games so well." Taylor was then asked if the atmosphere was similar to a Sheffield Shield game. "No," he said. "Before a Shield game you don't talk to the opposition as much. We've all been chatting together today."

Apart from the Hayden-Granger spat — and even that dissolved into giggles at the drinks break which followed — that feeling pervaded the day. It was the fault of none of the players, for they were all trying their best. The truth, however, is that they hardly knew who they were trying to beat, and why.

SCOREBOARD FROM SYDNEY

AUSTRALIA A won 108	
AUSTRALIA A	
G B Stewart b McDermott	19
M L Hayden c Slater b M E Waugh	50
D R Martyn c Taylor b Warne	20
G B Berran b McDermott	73
J L Lange b McDermott	7
R T Ponting b McGrath	19
P A Emery run out	4
G R Patterson c Taylor b McDermott	6
G B Powell not out	1
P E McIntyre not out	1
Extras (b 6, lb 2, w 1, nb 1)	10
Total (5 wickets, 50 overs)	208
S P George did not bat	
FALL OF WICKETS: 1-28, 2-88, 3-105, 4-136, 5-182, 6-188, 7-203, 8-208	
BOWLING: McDermott 10-1-25-4; Fleming 10-3-38-1; McGrath 10-1-44-1; Warne 10-3-37-1; M E Waugh 5-0-30-1; Law 5-0-27-0	

Indians collapse as Stemp dictates

By OUR SPORTS STAFF

RICHARD STEMPT threw down a challenge to Phil Tufnell after causing India A to collapse from their overnight 236 for four to 300 all out on the second day of the first five-day international with England A in Bangalore.

The Yorkshire left-arm spinner, who said that he had taken heart from the example of Darren Gough in Australia, took four wickets for 27 runs yesterday to give himself overall figures of six for 85. On a pitch already offering help to the slow bowlers, England A replied with 156 for three, with Nick Knight and Jason Gallian both contributing half-centuries. Mark Ramprakash played well for his unbeaten 30 and much will depend on him and the captain, Alan Wells, today.

Stemp, 27, who is bowling in sunglasses to stop the batsmen from seeing his eyes, has a smoother run-up and action after coaching from Norman Gifford at Lilleshall.

"That's the best I have bowled in my career and I am just so looking forward to bowling these days," Stemp said. "Last summer, when I was selected for a couple of Test squads, it scared the living daylight out of me. I didn't believe myself that I deserved to be there. But now I have come to terms with the fact that I can play Test cricket. I feel in the groove."

INDIA: First Innings	
J Singh c Knight b Stemp	32
V Raghoe c and b Stemp	90
A Muralidharan c and b Stemp	1
P Aravind c Knight b Stemp	38
R Divedi bow b Stemp	60
R V Yadav c Knight b Stemp	18
S Bhatnagar bow b Stemp	3
U Chatterjee c Knight b Stemp	24
R K Choudhary c Knight b Stemp	3
P Mhamshetty not out	9
A Kuruvilla b Stemp	15
Extras (b 7, lb 1, nb 1)	15
Total (182.2 overs)	300
FALL OF WICKETS: 1-99, 2-101, 3-157, 4-207, 5-282, 6-294, 7-288, 8-270, 9-288	
BOWLING: Stemp 22-6-27-4; Chappell 21-6-22-2; Stemp 47-2-16-84; Stemp 51-4-20-21; Stemp 11-1-42-0	
ENGLAND A: First Innings	
N V Knight c Yadav b Chatterjee	50
M P Vaughan c and b Chatterjee	1
J E R Gallian c Raghoe b Bhatnagar	58
M R Ramprakash not out	30
A P Wells not out	6
Extras (nb 6)	6
Total (5 wickets, 58 overs)	156
P N Wells: D G Cook, P A Jarvis, D P Salmons, G Chappell and R D Stemp to bat	
FALL OF WICKETS: 1-2, 2-37, 3-139	
BOWLING: Mhamshetty 12-3-30-1; Kuruvilla 6-0-18-0; Chatterjee 14-2-37-0; Chatterjee 10-2-23-1; Chatterjee 16-4-43-1	
Umpires: V K Ramaswamy and Jasbir Singh	

Hendry races to third title in succession

By PHIL YATES

STEPHEN HENDRY recorded his most convincing victory in a final since the 1990 Dubai Classic when he won the inaugural Liverpool Victoria charity challenge at the International Convention Centre, Birmingham last night.

Hendry earned a £800,000 cheque for his charity, the Down's Syndrome Association, with a comprehensive 9-1 defeat of Dennis Taylor.

The margin of victory equalled that by which he beat Steve Davis in Dubai five years ago.

The world champion, who won the United Kingdom championship in November and then retained his European Open title last month, has now woven together a 15-match winning streak.

Hendry has won four tournaments this season, £255,700 in prize-money and 51 titles during his ten-year professional career. He failed to reproduce the excellent breakthrough that was an outstanding feature of his 6-5 win over Alan McManus in his semi-final on Saturday but, with Taylor unable to score heavily and take advantage of the chances afforded him, the outcome was inevitable.

The Scot, who compiled a

145 total clearance against McManus, finished with a run of 107 in the tenth frame, but, by then, there was no way back for Taylor. Hendry always seemed destined for a comfortable win when Taylor, figuring in a final for the first time, since he lost 9-3 to Hendry in the climax to the 1990 Asian Open, tossed aside two gilt-edged opportunities to win the third frame.

After establishing a 2-0 lead with runs of 54, 44, and 55, Hendry led 51-33. He missed the last red across the top cushion to give Taylor the chance of fashioning a clearance but the experienced Irishman, who has struggled to find his best form in recent years, missed an easy brown and later the pink, because of excessive upper-body movement on the shot.

Taylor continued to commit one error after another and was in danger of being the first player since Dean Reynolds, a 10-0 loser to Steve Davis in the 1989 Rothmans Grand Prix, to be white-washed in a final. Victory in the seventh frame averted that humiliation, at least.

RESULTS: Final: S Hendry (50-0) b D Taylor 9-1 (10-15, 7-21, 61-44, 100-22, 74-41, 58-27, 20-71, 80-31, 78-35, 121-10)

Upstart sailors race with tenacity

FROM BARRY PICKTHALL IN SAN DIEGO



Egnot steers America 3 to victory over Stars & Stripes in a defender selection race for the America's Cup

UPSETS dominated the opening rounds of the America's Cup yachting trials here at the weekend as Bill Koch's all-woman crew aboard America 3 scored one over Dennis Conner's Stars & Stripes and the Japanese aboard Nippon beat John Bertrand's world champion, one Australia.

The victory by America 3 on Friday, in which Leslie Egnot beat Conner by more than a minute, led to wild but short-lived jubilation. The next day, Conner, four times the Cup winner, made no mistakes at the start, sitting on the weather hip of America 3 and driving right over. It took the women ten minutes to escape his shadow, but, despite their gut-wrenching, 27-tack duel over the remainder of the leg, Conner's men covered their every move and won by a telling 54m 47sec.

The biggest surprise was Nippon's one-minute win over Bertrand's fancied crew. The Japanese have made extensive changes to their boat since it was almost cut in half during a freak dismasting before the world championships in October. Makoto Namba, the captain, said the changes were cosmetic. "Our logo is a little longer and narrower," he said jokingly,

glossing over the new bow, stern and underbody given to the boat since the world championships.

The Japanese even overcame the ban on Peter Gilmour, their Australian coach and former match-race world champion, imposed by the organising committee on Friday, by carrying him as their seventeenth man, a place at the back of the boat usually reserved for sponsors or syndicate heads. The Japanese intend to press Gilmour's claim for eligibility before the international jury, and, in the meantime, keep him aboard.

The rules preclude him from playing a part in sailing the boat once the race is under way, and, to allay obvious doubts from rivals, the helmsman, John Cutler, from New Zealand, whose long-term connection with the Japanese satisfies the two-year residency rule, confirmed that Gilmour "has no influence, doesn't say anything and doesn't do anything — he just sits there."

But Nippon had no need for Gilmour's steering ability on Saturday. The Japanese got the better of the Australians at the start and dominated throughout.

Results, page 30

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Ron Noades, the Palace chairman, confirmed later that Palace had rejected a £4.7 million bid from Newcastle United for Armstrong but, ominously, added: "It was not rebuffed immediately." An improved bid may yet find Smith back scouring the likes of Cranleigh for a replacement.

CRYSTAL PALACE (4-4-2) N. Margety — J. Hughes, R. Shaw, C. Coleman, D. Gordon, J. Morgan, D. Cooper, R. Newman, G. Walsh (goals, 10 each, 74min) — C. Armstrong, J. Salako

LEICESTER CITY (4-5-1) R. Prosser — R. Smith, N. Morlan, C. Hill, L. Phelpoe — J. Lister-Jones, S. Thompson (sub, D. Lowe, 56), M. Draper, M. Blake, I. Omonodiro (sub, D. Okech, 75), J. Roberts

Referee: R. Turner

NOBODY could have been in any doubt about the relevance of Ricky Newman's opening goal for Crystal Palace on Saturday. All goals are gratefully received by supporters, of course, but when Newman's right-foot half-volley from 20 yards curled into the top far corner of Kevin Poole's net, the response was not so much relief as euphoria.

Evan Alar Smith, the normally undemonstrative Palace manager, leapt to his feet and punched the air in delight. *Well he might: the last time he had cause to celebrate a Palace goal in the FA Carling Premiership, there were still 50 shopping days to Christmas, the Government had a majority in the Commons and £7 million was a potential National Lottery jackpot, not the fee for a striker in suspect health who had just gone nine games without a goal.*

Later, as he patiently and courteously ran the gamut of press, radio and television

interviews. Smith expounded on the real significance of Newman's goal, and the one by George Ndhah from close range on the stroke of half-time that condemned a woeful Leicester City side to defeat. They were, in effect, a two-fingered gesture to the big-money clubs that prey on the likes of Palace.

Newman, like Ian Wright before him, had been found by Palace in non-league football, with Cranleigh, in the Parosol Combined Counties League, and nurtured into a player of rich potential. "It is ironic that the two who scored today cost nothing," Smith said. "Ndhah has been with the club since he was 14, Newman since he was 15. It is easy to sit in someone else's stand and say you have found a player that's worth £10 million... they don't ask much bloody finding if you do that. Now perhaps some of these other so-called scouts can go down to places like Cranleigh and find a few of their own."

Smith's controlled if barely concealed anger is understandable. Despite this win, Palace's excellent cup form and the fact that there are at

Frenchman's unprecedented double overshadows Tomba's sixth successive victory

Alphand rewrites Hahnenkamm history



David Powell reports
from Kitzbühel on a
World Cup weekend of
records and high drama

You need more than courage, strength, and a cool head to be the complete champion of the hardest ski race of all. Only with a feeling of indestructibility can the winner of the life-threatening Hahnenkamm downhill expect to emerge unscathed from celebrations at The Londoner pub in the centre of town, where tradition demands his presence on the night of his victory. "It was like walking into the mouth of a dragon," Steve Podhorski, twice a Hahnenkamm winner, recalled of his visits to the place where glasses fly through the air and customers dance on tables.

It must have been comforting, therefore, for Luc Alphand, his place in history assured after winning two downhill races on the Hahnenkamm in one day, to hear the words shouted to him by Jean-Luc Cretier, a teammate, at the bottom of the course. "Don't worry, tonight I will make sure you get back," Cretier said. Alphand smiled, though not a convincing smile.

Hardly had it seemed possible before the weekend that the appearance yesterday of Alberto Tomba, the sport's dominant personality, who was bringing to Kitzbühel a sequence of five successive slalom wins, would come as something of an anti-climax. This was ironic given that skiing's most popular downhill event was compromised after weather interruptions to ensure that the Italian's race went ahead as scheduled.

Never before had two World Cup downhill races been held in one day. Kitzbühel had taken on the postponed St. Anton downhill and scheduled it for Friday on the notorious Streif run, but heavy snow delayed the race again and, rather than try to clear the length of the course on Saturday and hold a full-length downhill yesterday, the organisers chose to stage two shortened races on Saturday and keep the stage free for Tomba yesterday. Tomba did not disappoint, extending to six his record sequence of slalom wins from the start of a season.

Tomba won by almost a second from Jure Kosir, of Slovenia, and maintained his season-long line on retirement that he would decide in March, by which time, perhaps, he will have his first world title and his first overall World Cup. Although he competed in only the slalom here — he fears the downhill — he extended his World Cup lead from 400 to 420 points.

Although the remaining races are mainly speed events in which Tomba does not compete, he is surely too far ahead to be caught. Kosir is second and might be

wishing for Tomba to retire. The Italian yesterday nominated the Slovenian as his successor.

If, for expediency one year, the Wimbledon men's final was reduced to three sets the public would still want to be there and so it was with Kitzbühel's downhill, Austria's favourite sporting event. As much for the carnival as the sport, tens of thousands of people were drawn to this Thirteenth Century town of 12,500 inhabitants in Tirol, where the houses are painted in bright colours.

The dawn chorus was provided by the random ringing of cowbells by the early arrivals. Just inside the entrance to the course, six men, well into adulthood, slow-marched in formation, each carrying a cowbell the size of a bucket. Their synchronised ringing drowned conversation as they went. Then Tuttschikl Mittersill arrived, 13 people of varying ages dedicated to the history of skiing. These characters brought skiing through the ages to life, with their wooden skis and clothing from the pre-Jean-Claude Killy era.

While they queued in their hundreds for the cable car to the improvised start at the Steilhang, others were drawn to the bakery, where the window display was on a Hahnenkamm theme, to the

betting caravan, where an Alphand double would make you 80 schillings to one, or to the temporary street bar near Kitzbühel Ski Club, where customers listened to the Hahnenkamm theme music. "The Streif is Life".

Tickets for the race, 150 schillings (about \$9) a time, were selling like hotcakes but business was slow at the Red Devil ski school. "This is always the quietest day of the season for us," the woman at the kiosk said. "The people here are here only for the race." A ski-school teacher, arriving to find no work, was

dispatched to help with final course preparations. For two weeks beforehand, nobody is allowed on the Streif and trespassers face a 5,000 schilling fine or three weeks in prison. Once the race is over, accomplished amateurs teens onto the Streif, taking their chance against the mountain.

This is where two Canadians, Brian Stannule and Todd Brooker, were deposited at death's door, only the skill of doctors saving their lives after spills. So intimidating can it be, standing in the start hut with Kitzbühel

860 metres below, unable to see the run as it drops away, preparing to travel at up to 90 miles per hour, that the racer is at war with his nerves. At the bottom, helicopters wait to rush the seriously injured to hospital. Urs Rieber, the 1984 World Cup downhill champion, lost the year, stepping onto the start gate, stepping back out and walking away from the sport.

Praise, then, to Pietro Vitalini, an Italian, who, having crashed spectacularly in the morning race, hitting the safety net and some-

saunting beyond a line of spectators, got up unhurt and was back for the afternoon race, finishing fifth. At the top of the cable car ride is a restaurant in which the middle and late order competitors can watch the early runners on television. Martin Bell, the British skier, is not keen on watching before he races because a bad crash can disturb the mind. He decided to watch just one. It was Vitalini. "Don't you just hate it when that happens," Bell said.

Tommy Moe, the Olympic champion, followed Vitalini on the second run and was glowing with enthusiasm, though he finished only eighth. "This is the Super Bowl of skiing," Moe said. "It's so exciting, you can hear the people cheering the whole way down." Now Alphand was waiting his turn. He had, he confessed, found it difficult to concentrate after his morning victory.

Alphand's first World Cup race win, after eight years of trying, was also the first by a Frenchman in the Kitzbühel downhill since Killy in 1967. Yet he had to contain his feelings. "It was like I did not win the first race because I could not let out my feelings," Alphand said. "I wanted to talk to the journalists about it but my trainer told me I had to concentrate on

the second race. It was very difficult."

Ski racing has lost its place in the hearts of the French people. In Lillehammer last year, France failed to win a medal at the Winter Olympics and barely 1,000 spectators watched the World Cup downhill in Val d'Isère this winter. Only homes with Eurosport would have seen Alphand's victory live on television in France.

France could certainly make use of Alphand's marketability. Aged 29, he is something of a comedian, speaks four languages, and has a degree in maths and science. His degree came from Albertville but he missed the 1992 Winter Olympics there with a groin injury which, as he put it, left him "walking sideways for a year". Now he is less aggressive on skis and, after numerous injuries, he is shedding his reputation for crashing.

"After the Austrians had three in the first four in Val d'Isère, we came to have the French championships here," Cretier said. At least Alphand's skis were Austrian. He was supposed to have been back yesterday to contest the slalom but, having departed The Londoner at 2.30am, decided to scratch. Cretier raced but finished last. A night on the tiles in Kitzbühel is no preparation for a morning on skis.

Ertl takes chance as leaders crash out

By OUR SPORTS STAFF

MARTINA ERTL, of Germany, secured only the second Alpine skiing World Cup victory of her career yesterday after a dramatic finish to the fourth women's slalom event of the season, in Garmisch-Partenkirchen.

The double Olympic slalom champion, Vreni Schneider, of Switzerland, who led after the first leg, and Pernilla Wiberg, the Swede who was second, crashed out after missing gates on the final run. Ertl, who was third after the first run, claimed victory with an aggregate time of 1min 22.54sec. Deborah Compagnoni, of Italy, was second in 1:22.67, with Gabriela Zingre-Grat, of Switzerland, third in 1:22.83.

Schneider, 30, seeking the 54th World Cup triumph of her career, had given another master-class in slalom skiing in the first leg to lead Wiberg by 0.03sec and Ertl by 0.21sec. She had been smooth and relaxed on the hard-packed surface, but the veteran's hopes vanished in a spray of snow when she attacked the course too aggressively and missed a gate at the top of the second run. "I don't know exactly what happened," Schneider said. "It happened so quickly."

The mistake cost Schneider the chance of taking over from her compatriot, Heidi Zeller-Bachler, at the top of the overall World Cup rankings. Her rival, Katja Seizinger, of Germany, also failed to threaten the leader after missing a gate in the first leg, but Ertl, 21, was able to stand on top of a World Cup podium for the first time since she won a giant slalom in the American resort of Vail last year.

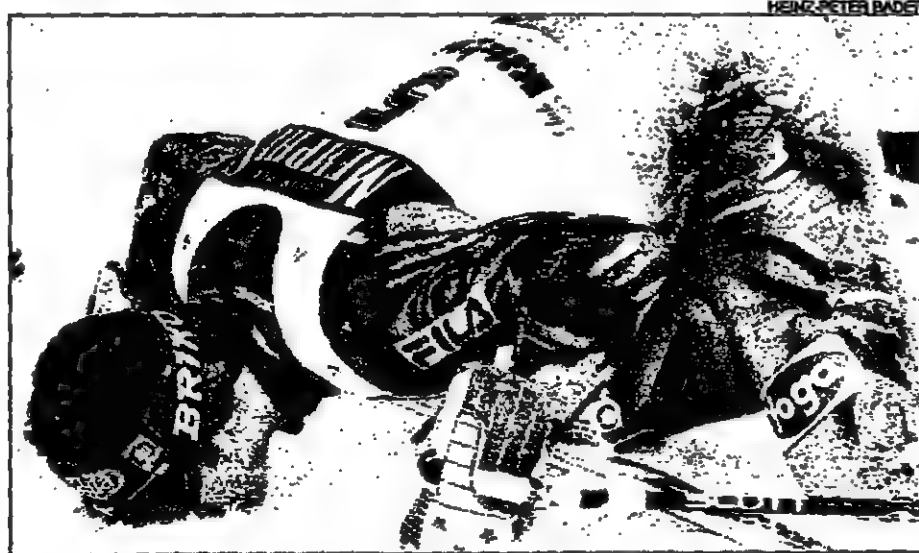
"I made a mistake in the upper part of the run and did not believe I could do it," Ertl said. "I had the luck. The others didn't."

The result gave Germany their first victory in a women's World Cup slalom since 1987, when Christa Kinzhofer-Guetlein won in the Italian resort of Piancavallo. It completed a weekend of surprises after Florence Masnada, of France, won her first race on the circuit in the super-giant slalom on Saturday, the first time the races had returned to the German piste where the former world champion, Ulrike Maier, died in a crash last year. The competitors observed a minute's silence in tribute to Maier before racing.



Astrid Loedemel pays silent tribute to Maier

Alphand on the way to becoming the first Frenchman to win a Kitzbühel downhill since Jean-Claude Killy in 1967. Photograph: Armando Trovati



Tomba kisses the Kitzbühel snow after extending his winning run to six races

Taunton again roll toward twin towers

Taunton Town 2
Elmore 1

By WALTER GAMMIE

TAUNTON Town, last season's losing FA Vase finalists, brought a return to Wembley a step closer by winning an exciting fourth-round tie against Elmore, a fellow Great Mills League side, before 964 enthusiastic supporters at Wordsworth Drive on Saturday.

Elmore were handicapped by the gassing of Eamonn Collins, their player-manager, whose reaction to being sent off earlier in the season had brought down the full weight of the FA disciplinary beaks. He was, unusually, banned from contact with his team before and during the match.

Collins, an agitated figure in the stand in the first half, was nowhere to be seen in the second and resurfaced only in the bar. My attempt to solicit his views was intercepted by Andy Wharton, his assistant. "He's a fiery character," Wharton explained, as he denied his boss the chance to talk himself into further trouble.

Collins has recruited a clutch of former Torquay United players and some talented youngsters and made Elmore the league's "best footballing side", according to the Taunton manager, Russell Musker.

"Our job was to stop them playing," Musker said. Taunton stifled Elmore in the first half and collected a goal when Phil Lloyd sliced into his own net. Two minutes into the second half, Derek Fowler made a header count, nearly stumbling in excitement at being unmarked at a corner.

Gareth Morgan turned in a goal for Elmore in the 53rd minute and, galloping breaks aside, Taunton then defended against increasing pressure in splendid backs-to-the-wall cup-tie fashion.

TAUNTON TOWN (3-5-2): K. Maury — D. Ewers, K. Giddens, G. Taylor — W. Morris, D. Fowler, D. Pelly, A. Cook, N. Jones — P. West, A. Farrell.
ELMORE (3-5-2): M. Coombe — S. Kidd, A. Wharton (left), D. Edwards, Z. Jones, P. Lloyd — B. Rowe, S. Pugh, M. Anthony, S. Joyce, S. Powell — G. Morgan, M. Lewis.
Referee: M. Preece.

Oliver Holt risks health and happiness in the North Stand at Stamford Bridge

Gloom with a view in the company of morons

The only obvious non-Chelsea supporter in the lower tier of the new North Stand at Stamford Bridge had been punched, abused and spat at, and then escorted from the ground midway through the first half. So when Sheffield Wednesday equalised in the fifth minute of injury time at the end of the game on Saturday, it seemed wise not to laugh hysterically but to offer a silent prayer of thanks instead.

By that stage, I was no longer in my seat in row Z of the stand, which was opened earlier this season. Seats were not designed for the man mountain of a supporter who was sitting next to me and sharing half an hour his constant exhortations to his comrades to "sing up" were becoming wearing.

Worse than that, a large proportion of the Chelsea supporters all around me insisted on shouting "aaaaaah" at the top of their voices throughout

the game, particularly when the action slowed in the second half. It is commonplace for all football supporters to do this after the opposing goalkeeper has taken a goal kick, to express their contempt for his effort, but in this corner of West London its use is apparently considered witty, even during open play.

The pleasure of watching a football match has always been in the distillation of several disparate elements: the atmosphere, who is standing or sitting near you, the performance of your team and of individual players. It is not enough if your team plays well and the atmosphere is flat, and vice versa.

At Stamford Bridge on Saturday, the paucity of the play, the comparative lack of noise and the moronic qualities of some of the supporters combined to make it an afternoon of drudgery, something to be endured rather than enjoyed. It also confirmed my doubts about the wisdom of transfer-

ring the denizens of the terraces, in this case The Shed, into seats.

The joy of standing at football was not only in the sense of oneness, the abandonment in being part of a mass, but also in the freedom of movement it afforded. When you sit, you are stuck with those around you. Things that were funny, when you knew you could have a break from them,

pass when you are trapped in one place.

Displaced terrace-dwellers spend most of the afternoon standing anyway, rising automatically from their seats at a moment of excitement, forcing you to rise, too. The first ten minutes are spent leaping up and down, allowing late-comers to pass, cursing them under your breath, and it seems no time at all until the

same people are filing past again five minutes before half-time.

At least in the North Stand, the facilities they are heading for are first-class, an age away from the primitive conditions that used to exist at league grounds. The toilets are spacious and relatively clean, and there are well-stocked fast-food bars. Each outlet is flanked by two television screens, beneath which the supporters gather to get the half-time and full-time scores.

The view from the stand, which is behind one goal, is also excellent when it is not obscured by other supporters. Unless you are a member, you are restricted to the lower tier, which is something of a disadvantage, but Ken Bates, the Chelsea chairman, is offering five-year season tickets in the upper tier for £5 shy of £2,000.

Even from the lower tier, I had a fine view of John Spencer's rising drive, which crashed into the roof of the Sheffield Wednesday net at the

other end of the ground for the Chelsea goal. Spencer, in general, was the best player on view, although Chris Waddle contributed some artful, flighted passes with the outside of his left foot.

I was standing right by the exit, fighting the urge to dash for the Underground before the rush, when Ian Nolan equalised for Wednesday. I was glad I had stayed.

I looked round to try to catch a glimpse of the man who had been screaming in my ear for most of the game, but was caught up in the surge of angry supporters pushing me down the stairs, screaming "cheat" at the referee as they went.

Behind me, one man who looked particularly disturbed by his team's misfortune was pounding the concrete wall with the flat of his hand. He watched the television screen and yelled obscenities at it when the Chelsea result came up. Suddenly, the afternoon took on a rosier hue.

THROUGH THE TURNSTILE	
212.00	£3.50 Cheeseburger and medium Cola
£2.00	220.50
£2.00	

SNOOKER

SNOOKER

SNOOKER

BIRMINGHAM: Charity challenge: Semi-final: D Taylor (41 ms) bt T Griffiths (Wales) 5-3; S Hendry (Scott) bt A McManus (Scott) 5-3. Final: Hendry bt Reed (Eng) 7-1.

ALICEFORD: British open: Semi-final: 1st round: S Newbury (Wales) bt J Gillespie (Eng) 5-2; M Johnson-Davies (Eng) bt R Wylies (Eng) 5-3; 5/16 Lee (Eng) bt R Howes (Eng) 5-2; J Wych (Wales) bt P Funn (Eng) 5-4; J Beck (Eng) bt R Reed (Eng) 5-1.

WYNDOL: 1st round: E Henderson (Scott) 5-4; D Davies (Wales) bt M King (Eng) 5-4; C Small (Scott) bt N Gilbert (Eng) 5-1; N Mosley (Eng) bt R Lawler (Eng) 5-1; C Frowde (Eng) bt M Wilson (Eng) 5-3; N Tennant (Eng) bt J Rodd (Eng) 5-1; J Jones (Eng) bt J Michie (Eng) 5-3.

TABLE TENNIS

KARLSRUHE: European nations cup

Group A: England 3 Belgium 0; England 1 France 1; Group B: Sweden 3 Hungary 1; Germany 3 Poland 0; Group C: Sweden 3 England 0; Russia 3 Germany 0; Sweden 3 England 0; Russia 3 Germany 2; Finland: Sweden 3 Russia 1.

TENNIS

SYDNEY: New South Wales open: Man Samir Bashir P McInnis (US) 6-4 to A Gauchier (N) 6-3, 6-4; R Flensburg (Aus) 6-1 to R Furlan (A) 6-4, 6-3; Final: McInnis to R Furlan 6-2, 6-3; Western Semi-finals: L Davenport (US) 6-1 to K Kiste (Japan) 6-4, 4-1 ret; C Sabatini (Arg) 6-1 to M-J Fernandez (US) 6-3, 6-4; Final: Sabatini to Davenport 6-3, 6-4.

AUCKLAND: Men's tournament: Semi-finals: C Adams (US) 6-1 to V Spadea (US) 7-6, 6-4; 2 Enqvist (Swe) 6-4 to V Volkov (Rus) 7-6, 6-4; Final: Enqvist to Adams 6-2, 6-3.

JAKARTA: Men's tournament: Semi-finals: P Hasmus (Aus) 6-1 to K Carlsen (Den) 6-3, 6-4; 2 K Kiste (Japan) 6-4 to C Sabatini (Arg) 6-3, 6-4; Final: Kiste to Sabatini 6-3, 6-4.

VOLLEYBALL

NATIONAL WOMEN'S LEAGUE: First division. Leeds 3 Wexpos 1.
EBA CUP: Quarter-final: Leeds II Newcastle II 1.

Herald's FF		22 Currie		P	
Herald's FF	Tric: Lawns	Mine	Pen		
Hewitt	4 Currie	Ty: Dickson	Pen		
Donaldson Z					
Stewart's Mel	16 Watsonians		2		
Stewart's Mel	FF: Tric: Kizie				
Hodgson, Pans	Hodgson 3 Watsonians				
Tric: Kizie Z	Hodge	Coras: G Hastings 2			
W of Hastings 3					
W of Scotland	13 Jed-Forest				
West of Scotland: Tric: Stot	Watsonians				
Per Barratt	Jed-Forest: Ty: Barne				
Richards					

	P	W	D	L	F	A	P
Strling Co	9	8	0	1	189	116	
Watsonians	9	7	0	2	203	153	
Scotsburgh	9	6	0	3	264	177	
Jeddon's FF	9	6	0	3	148	112	
Midvale	9	5	0	4	216	175	
Midvale Wk	9	5	0	4	154	118	
	9	5	0	4	161	145	

Sala	9	4	1	4	142	194
Edinburgh Ac	3	3	2	4	124	123
W of Scotland	9	4	0	5	130	166
Dundee HSFP	9	3	1	5	133	106
Jet-Power	9	3	0	6	127	176
Stewart's Mel	9	1	0	8	159	204
Cumie	9	1	0	8	114	194
Second division						
Corncroftine	12				Freston Lodge	10
Glasgow Ac	19				Grangemouth	10
Gordonians	13				Baginbun	10
Haddington	9				Belkirk	10
Kirkcaldy	27				Kelso	10
Musselburgh	11				Edinburgh W	10
Peasebly	15				Wigtownshire	10
Insurance Corporation League						
First division						
Blackbrook Col	3				Sherrinon	10

Division	W	L	T	Pct	Points
First division					
Durhampton	11	0	0	1.000	22
Intonsense	8	3	0	.727	16
Y Munster	7	4	0	.636	14
	13	7	0		
Stamton	7	5	0	.583	14
Blackrock Col	7	6	0	.538	14
St Mary's Col	6	5	1	.556	13
Garraun	6	4	1	.591	13
St. Mary's	6	4	0	.600	12
Inishquin	6	3	3	.667	12
Sunday's Well	7	2	0	.778	14
Chapman	6	1	0	.857	12
Old Wesley	5	1	0	.833	10
Lacrimosa	5	1	4	.714	12
F. Mander	5	7	0	.417	10
Second division					
Bangor	11	0	0	1.000	22
Greystones	10	1	0	.909	20
Old Belvedere	11	0	0	1.000	22
Terranure Coll	7	4	0	.636	14
UCD	3	8	0	.261	6

Heineken League

Second division

Llandowry 29 Tynby Uld 1

Llandowry: Triest: P Jones, parity ty
 Gors: Richards 2. Parris: Richards 3. Tynby
 Uldist: Parris 1. Kings

Club matches

Aberavon	19	Neath	2
Berry Hill	8	Taunton	10
Cardiff	86	Maesteg	2
Cross Keys	13	Newbridge	2
Durwent	12	Llanharari	1
North	16	Trochry	1
Newport	22	Pontypool	2
North	5	Swanley	2
S Wales Pool	24	Brigend	2
Swansea	22	Llanelli	1

Representative matches

Wales Schools	6 NZ Schools	40
North Schools	17 Australia Sch	20

LONDON: First division: Camberley 20, Ealing 8, Guildford and Godalming 1, Esher 10; Harlow 10, Eton Manor 10; Maidstone 6, Streatham and Croydon 9; Old Colliers 14, Rustip 40; Old Mid Whittellins 15, Southern 18.

SOUTH WEST: First division: Exmouth 21, St Ives 6, Chertemps 37, Salisbury 14, Clevedon 9, Bournemouth 15, Gloucester 0; 2nd division 24, Sheborne 11, Maidenhead 15, Torquay 15.

HOLLAND: First division: Camp 10, Mersheid 11, Dordrecht 6, Leamington 15; Stafford 19, Westphalen 15, Witlichurch 4; Townscars 15, Wolverhampton 3; Badmuth 20, Worcester 47, Syston 3.

NORTH: First division: Huddersfield 16, Widnes 24; Hull Ionians 8, Middleton 19.

**SUNDAY
FOOTBALL**

FA CARLING PREMIERSHIP: Manchester
Utd v Blackburn (Sat, 4.0).

HOCKEY

HOCKEY ASSOCIATION CLUBS TROPHY:
First round: Alderley Edge v Corby; British
Always Club v Old Holcombe; Basingstoke
v John Player; Bradford, Bradford v
Leamster; Bradford College v Flomford;
Barnbrook v Barnley Bank; Camberley v
Jersey; Coalville v Cranstoner; Durham
University v GPT Coaches; Ipswich and

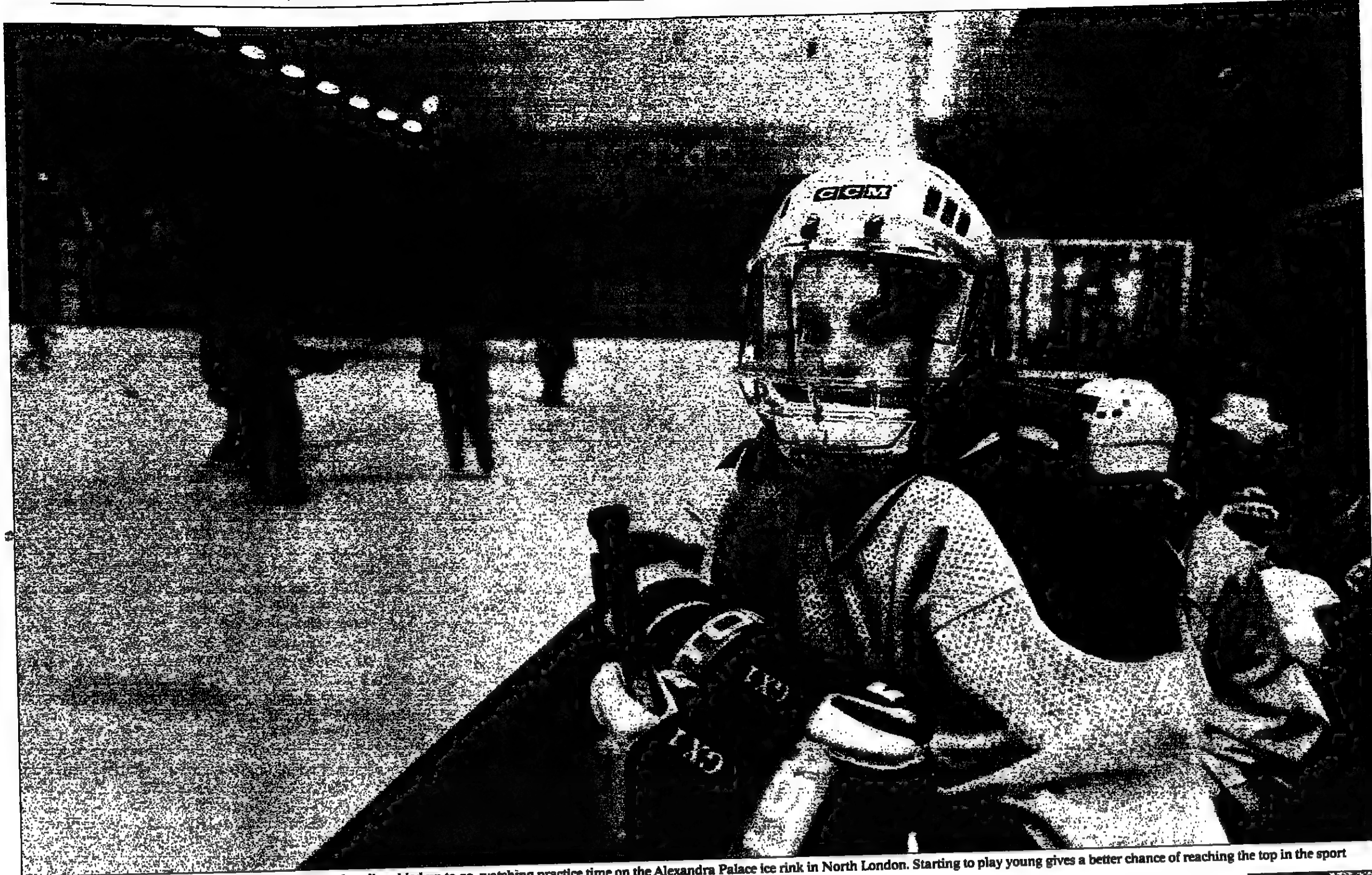
RUGBY LEAGUE

STONES BITEY CHAMPIONS: First division; Featherstone Ravens v Doncaster (3.30); Huddersfield Giants v Leeds (6.45); Warrington (3.0); Oldham v Salford (Eagles) (3.0); St Helens v Hull (3.0); Widnes v Wakefield Trinity (3.0); Warrington Town v

OTHER SPORT
BASKETBALL: Budweiser League: Doncaster v Chester (6.30); Sheffield v Leopards (6.15).

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Gareth A. Davies takes a look at the fastest team game around — the compelling sport of ice hockey



Bradley Beck-Hill, 12, of the Haringey Pee-wees sits, all padded up to go, watching practice time on the Alexandra Palace ice rink in North London. Starting to play young gives a better chance of reaching the top in the sport

Pick up your puck and skate



Christopher Stewart

Christopher Stewart, 14, is a goal-minder for a junior side at Nottingham Panthers.

"I HAVE been playing for three months, although I have been practising at general skating for seven months. I have always played in goal in football, at Nottingham Forest and Notts County and in field hockey. But being in goal in ice hockey is different from any other sport."

"All the armour is very heavy. It is a bit like wearing cricket pads on your arms and legs, plus, with a stick, it is quite difficult to move around. As a net-minder, the emphasis is on skating from side to side, which is a real skill."

"The full kit for a net-minder is quite expensive, but the junior side at Nottingham have been very helpful by supplying some of the kit. Having just started the sport, I find it physically exhausting. Whereas the players come on and off in shifts, as a net-minder, you are on the ice for most of the three 20-minute periods during a match."

"I train twice a week as well as matches but I still have to maintain my general skating once a week. I am on ice normally about eight hours a week. Ice hockey is much faster than any game I have ever played. It is enjoyable and very competitive. But it is not violent."

"Sometimes there is a bit of friction between players on the ice, but with all the padding no one comes to much harm. In fact, I've had more injuries playing football."

"It is great to see Stephen Lyle, who is only 15, playing as net-minder for Cardiff Devils in the Premier Division. For him to be playing with men twice his age is amazing. It takes guts when that puck starts flying at you."

"I now follow the game very closely. My only regret so far was not being able to get a ticket for the Benson and Hedges Cup Final. I love to have been there."



Here are some indicators for those who have shared the excitement of player and puck blurring across the TV screen, only to be left confused by what and who goes where:

● An ice-hockey match is played over three 20-minute periods.

● Six players from each team are allowed on to the ice at any one time, though squads usually number 20. Substitutions are made willy-nilly.

● The object, of course, is to get the puck — a frozen piece of vulcanised rubber — into your opponents' net, by hook, crook or stick.

● Apart from the net-minder — who bears an uncanny resemblance to the Michelin Man and shares many of the rubberman's occupational hazards, such as danger from flying debris and being rolled over by fast-moving traffic, the on-ice team normally comprises two defenders and three forwards.

and all the American-inspired razzmatazz.

Of the 7,500 players registered with the BIHA, 3,000 are seniors playing in men's leagues. The league is spearheaded by a British premier division

and a division one. There are separate lower divisions for Scotland and England.

The larger clubs in the country have women's teams, and increasingly, junior sides. There are junior sides, some with leagues, for those under ten, 12, 14, 16, 19 and 21. Great Britain also competes internationally, at under 21, 19, 16 levels, and in women's ice hockey.

Nationwide, almost 400 teams at 60 clubs play at ice rinks, of which 40 reach international playing standards. Almost half of those who play the game are juniors (under 19).

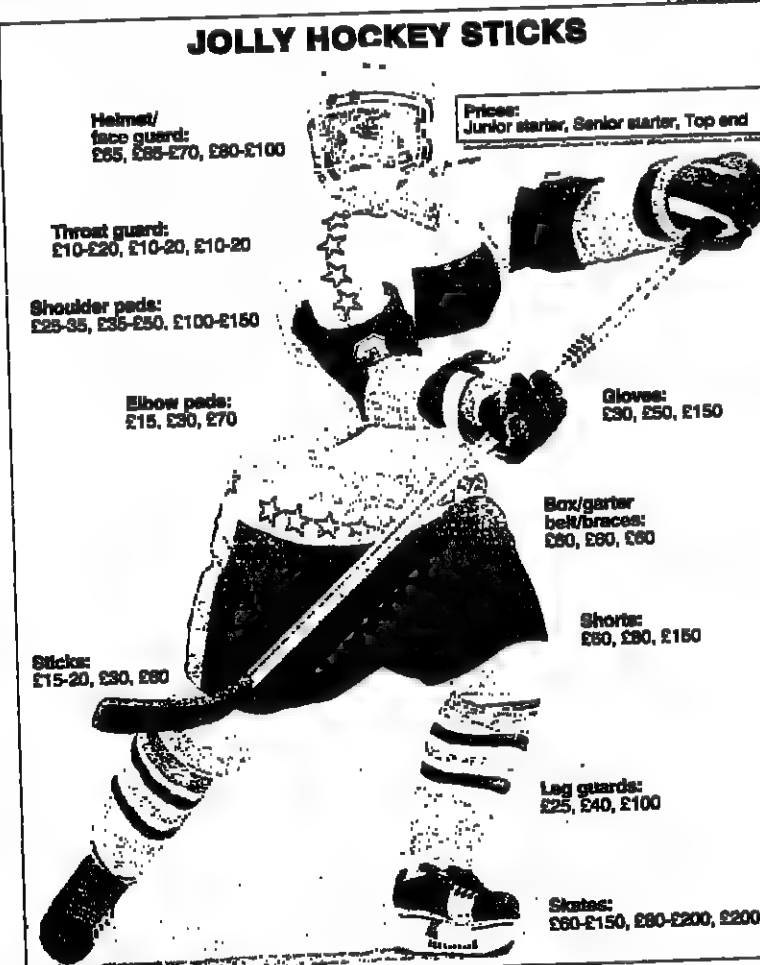
According to BIHA figures, numbers of people taking up the sport are growing by 7.5 per cent annually. David Pickles, general secretary of the BIHA, says: "There is so much skill involved at the top level, that it is better take it up at a young age." That is why so many youngsters are now getting involved. It takes about ten years to get from the bottom to Premiership standard.

Stephen Lyle, 15, who has been playing for Cardiff Devils, epitomises the influx of youngsters into the sport. "The younger the better, but that's not to say that seniors are in any way discouraged from taking up the sport," he says.

Many of the country's clubs offer coaching facilities to learn to skate before stick and puck meet. Experienced players regularly practise general skating to increase skills, fitness and stamina.

Recreational ice hockey is also popular with teams across Britain. There is no league format, only "friendlies" by challenge. Nonetheless, it is still taken seriously.

"Make inquiries at your local ice rink," says Ron Christison, administrator for recreational ice hockey, organised by the English and the Scottish Ice Hockey Associations. "There is bound to be a local rink in your vicinity. Recreational ice hockey is



now an accepted part of the sport. We play non-league matches 52 weeks of the year. Bear in mind, however, that team practice often takes place late at night." Such recreational teams are often made up of men and women.

Personal safety, through the correct equipment, is extremely important. Although full kits can be expensive,

juniors can get started for around £250, while senior starters will need to invest £350 to keep themselves well cushioned. Finally, the 64,000 dollar question: is ice hockey a sport for all?

It is certainly no holiday on ice but once kitted-out, revved-up, psyched-in and padded up to the eyeballs, it's an enticing game.



Deborah Auty

Deborah Auty, who skated recreationally for 15 years, has been playing ice hockey for Slough Phantoms in the women's premier division since September. At 32, she is challenging the conventional idea that in ice hockey you have to start young.

"I HAD been interested in ice hockey for years though I had followed the sport solely as a spectator. Years ago there didn't seem to be any women's teams."

"I skate recreationally six hours a week. One evening, when I was skating at Slough ice rink, one of the girls from the Slough Phantoms approached me and asked me if I had ever thought about playing."

"Intrigued, I went along to a practice session on a Saturday evening — midnight in fact, since training takes place after general skating hours — where the coach had a look at my skating ability and then lent me a stick and gloves. I felt very vulnerable at first, and even though there is no 'bodychecking' in women's hockey, it is still physical. Seeing how fast the puck travels soon made me aware that I could easily get hurt."

"I found there were immediate differences in general skating you go in one direction. Ice hockey is backwards, forwards, sideways, the lot."

"I weighed it up for two weeks after that. Then I tried to get hold of a second-hand kit. There was nothing anywhere. I knew that if I was going on again I would have to be kitted out. So I spent £350 to get started."

"The protective armour made all the difference. Without a doubt, skating with kit on, you take more chances. Now I love it. It is so fast, it is thrilling. I just wish I had taken it up when I was younger. I know there is a woman playing competitively in the United States who is 51, so in my mind, I have got another 20 years of playing ahead of me yet."

Peter Sommer, 24, tells of an adventure which involved taking Britain's most popular hobby, walking, to extremes

A saunter through ancient Turkey

It all stemmed from an old photograph of towering mountains enveloping a verdant river valley, through which Alexander the Great allegedly passed 2,300 years ago. Like the photographer, the explorer Sir Aurel Stein, I longed to wander in the depths of Asia in search of clues to the ancient past.

I had become fascinated by the character of Alexander while studying for a degree in Ancient History and Archaeology. Who could not be intrigued by a man who inspired his soldiers to follow him for 12 years, beyond the known ends of the earth? They marched some 14,000 miles: from Greece to India and back to Babylon, before the Macedonian king died at the age of 32 in 323 BC.

I decided to organise an expedition in an attempt to

retrace his footsteps from the city of Troy to the site of the Battle of Issus. I wanted to see exactly where an ancient army could have passed, and where topography and lack of water would have made it too difficult.

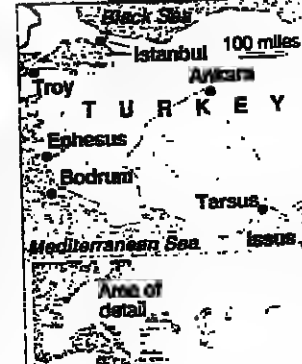
It took Alexander and his 40,000 soldiers eighteen months to reach Issus. By refraining from fighting battles and besieging towns, I managed to do the walk in four and a half months, covering about fifteen miles a day.

I am always animated by a physical challenge, but felt daunted by this journey which dwarfed my previous walking best of four wet days along Hadrian's Wall. A knee injury had hampered my training,



Peter Sommer with crooks

but I did manage one hike with a rucksack — a fifteen-mile trek in the Peak district on a windy, but beautifully crisp, day that was enough to fill me with optimism.



I began at the site of Troy, took a sharp turn north to Granicus, near present-day Biga, where Alexander dealt his first blow to the Persian armies and finished up, four

pairs of boots later, in the eastern Mediterranean port of Iskenderun (the ancient Alexandria), where the battle of Issus took place in 333 BC.

While Alexander's armies lived off the land, I lived off the generosity of villagers on my route. If I had stopped everywhere I was offered hospitality it would have taken me two years.

The men of villages I arrived at would gaze at me from their sedentary position at the coffee shop. They knew all about Alexander, and would dispatch me in the right direction armed with their knowledge of the local ruins and terrain.

There was a moment of despair near the modern resort town of Antalya where the trail

became obscured by the tourist development along the Mediterranean sea. I headed inland towards Ankara to imitate the sweep of the army through central Anatolia.

By the end I was averaging 20 miles a day and had acquired a certain legendary status, earning the name of Coban, the Turkish for shepherd, because of the crook I carried. In addition my walk had raised several thousand pounds for SCOPE (previously the Spastics Society). I had been inspired to raise money for this charity by a friend who suffers from cerebral palsy.

Organising the expedition had been a massive challenge: my life becoming a chaotic quest for funding, equipment, and publicity, even with the patronage of Michael Wood, the television historian, and Sir Ranulph Fiennes, the explorer.

Wasps increase threat of relegation for London rivals with comfortable victory

Greenstock finishes off spirited Harlequins

Wasps 25
Harlequins 7

BY DAVID HANDS
RUGBY CORRESPONDENT

THE quivering beneath the feet of Harlequins is that of the trapdoor which could plummet them into the second division of the Courage Clubs Championship. Defeat at Sudbury on Saturday was not unexpected but the combination of results elsewhere has left only Northampton below them in the table. The one relief is that this season—as a concession to World Cup “pressures”—only one club is relegated.

Anyone who confides that either club is “too good to go down” needs their head examining. West Harlequins, like Harlequins, have collected only seven league points but are acquiring a nasty home bite. Harlequins and Northampton must visit them and there is a certain irony in the fact that two of West’s better but apparently discontented players, Mick Watson and Simon Mitchell, have transferred their loyalties to Harlequins.

Of their remaining seven league matches, Harlequins have home advantage for only three, of which one is against Bath. Northampton at least have both Bath and Leicester out of the way now and should they visit the Stoop Memorial Ground on March 25 and win, then April will be a dogfight.

The curiosity on Saturday was that Harlequins, robbed by unavailability, illness and injury of nine first choices and of a tenth, Troy Coker, by the long-range edict of the Australia

lian Rugby Union (ARU), played with commendable spirit to restrict Wasps to only three tries. Indeed, had they structured a plan to use their lineout advantage to better effect, they might have gone closer, if only through penalties, but in the second half they mistakenly took a page from the Wasps book and ran everything, even out of deep defence.

Coker was actually named among the replacements but withdrew because the ARU requires World Cup squad players not to appear in competitive games overseas. Coker, ambitious to appear in a third World Cup and with the utilitarian back-five skills to do so, is saving himself for Queenstown’s state programme.

In his absence, the Harlequins pack covered itself in glory; over the last two years Chris Sheasby has cast off the playboy image that was attached to his game and no player worked harder, with or without the body harness that he doffed just after the interval. In the wake of the “reformed” South Africans of the autumn, that was another instructive intervention by John Pearson, the referee.

The South Africans attracted much criticism for the supporting equipment with which they festooned their upper bodies. The law allows only such padding as can be incorporated into the rugby shirt itself and both Sheasby and Rory Jenkins were required to remove independent harnesses during the game.

As it was, Sheasby and his two flankers tackled so well and put such pressure on the Wasps ball carriers that the home side’s fluid game, which



Simon Hunter, the Wasps wing, proves to be a handful for two Harlequins defenders in the Courage Clubs Championship match

requires accuracy in the pass and good ball retention, became unhinged at critical times. Such were the holes that Damian Hopley smashed in the middle that it seemed almost impossible that Wasps should not run away with the game, but Harlequins’ concession of only one second-half try confirms they did not.

Their two first-half tries came from Nick Greenstock, who has had coaches at various representative levels pursuing this season. Although played here on the wing,

Greenstock’s preference is for centre, where he has been picked for England’s under-21, emerging players and A teams this season.

“Both Nick and Damian [Hopley] are ambitious players who have come on very well this season,” Rob Smith, the Wasps coach, said, explaining the reasons for switching the pair between centre and wing [Hopley appears on the wing, alongside Greenstock, for England A in Dublin on Friday]. The utility aspect of the game can be

fraught with danger, however, as can the demands of different national squads on young players. “We have to keep an eye on how much they are playing because young players tend to get hampered into the ground rather than getting the chance to develop properly,” Smith said.

Greenstock, for example, has played only four league games this season because of an ankle injury from which he was tempted to return too quickly, in the hope of raising his representative profile. Two

tries now did that for him, the first finishing a blind-side attack by Ryan and Bates, the second a run-in after Hopley had demolished the defence.

Both came after Mensah had scored for Harlequins in his first league game since he badly damaged his knee against Bristol in September. Sadly, he did not complete the game, a hamstring injury forcing him off two minutes before another thrust by Hopley led to Greenstock setting up another promising young player, Upton, for the

try. These are players blooming early; Harlequins, forced by circumstances to draw deeply on their reserves, may yet find too late that they have the same.

SCORES: Wasps: Three Greenstock (3), Upton conversions, Gregory (2), Penally goals: Gregory (2). Harlequins: Try: Mensah, Conversion: Staples.
WASPS: J. Upton, N. Greenstock, G. Chalk, D. Hopley, S. Hunter, G. Gregory, R. Bates, L. Poplewell, P. Delaney, J. Probyn, L. Dalgle, R. Kinsley, M. Greenstock, C. Williams, J. Pienaar.
HARLEQUINS: J. Staples, P. Mensah, R. O’Connell, J. Kayser, S. Brownley, C. Wright, R. Vickers, S. Brown, J. Hamilton-Smith, M. Mullins, M. Poplewell, J. Desmond, W. Dawson, R. Jenkins, C. Sheasby. Mensah replaced by R. O’Connell (80 min).
REFEREE: J. Pearson (Durham).

Bristol’s captain moved to invoke D-notice

Salisbury 21
Bristol 9

BY CHRISTOPHER IRVINE

DAVE ALRED, just back from teaching Australians the science of goal-kicking, watched this tale of two stand-off halves with one eye on his Bristol charge, Mark Tainton, and the other drawn uncontrollably to Paul Turner.

Where would Sale be without their mercurial Welsh player-coach? Maybe not in fifth place. He can also kick with both feet, badly in Alred’s expert opinion. But Turner’s real forte is the sleight of hand to which Bristol could find no answer on Saturday.

“It’s amazing that a player with oodles of natural talent should be so technically inept in the kicking department,” Alred said. Four successes from nine goal attempts was a poor return, yet, at 35, Turner is probably too old to learn new tricks.

Tainton, in spite of taking his penalty-goal tally to a record 42 for the league season, had few other reasons to celebrate after his 200th appearance for the club.

Although showing himself a sweet striker of the dead ball, Tainton’s inability to find touch put Bristol under desperate pressure. In coming off his mark too quickly, he fell for Turner’s dummy at a scrum and Stokes went through the gap to put the lid on a fourth victory by Sale. With their next three games against lower opposition, re-

Full results and league tables Page 30

spectability rather than mere survival is possible.

Bristol’s problems went deeper than the absence of Kyran Bracken at scrum half. Desperate, dreadful and diabolical was the summing-up of Derek Eves, before the captain ran out of D words.

Whereas against Bath the previous week Bristol never looked like scoring a try but kept trying, the ghost was given up once Mallinder had burst over on the blind side just before half-time.

Bristol’s woeful lack of imagination—they have managed just two tries away from home—contrasted with the customary Turner-inspired adventure that Sale have supplemented with forward steel. Neil Ashurst was in the van of an attacking back row that smothered Bristol’s stuttering attempts to breach the gain-line.

The consistently excellent Baldwin did a fine containment job alongside Fowler in the Sale lineout on the twin towers. Shaw and Blackmore, Vyvyan, the No 8, ran Patten and Eves ragged, and the Manchester-born New Zealand wing, Chris Yates, with a series of blockbusting runs down the left, signalled the arrival of another exciting talent at Heywood Road.

SCORES: Sale: Three Mallinder, Staples, Conversion: Turner. Penally goals: Turner (3). Bristol: Penally goals: Tainton (2).
SALE: J. Mallinder, M. Appleton, J. Broadhead, G. Stokes, C. Yates, P. Turner, C. Brown, P. Smith, S. Brown, D. Eves, D. Eves, J. Foster, J. Fowler, D. Baldwin, N. Ashurst, C. Vyvyan.
BRISTOL: P. Hogg, G. Shaw, R. Kibbles, M. Matthews, D. John, M. Tainton, M. Chubb, A. Sharp, M. Rogers, D. Hogg, R. Armstrong, S. Shaw, A. Blackmore, D. Eves, J. Patten. Sharp replaced by A. Lattimore (80 min).
REFEREE: N. Cousins (London).

Scott sees red over first card

Leicester 29
Orrell 19

BY BRYAN STILES

A SCOTLAND international will carry the burden of being the first player to receive a red card in the first division of the Courage Clubs Championship under the new system of English rugby for policing foul play. Martin Scott, the Orrell hooker, was dismissed by Tony Spreadbury, the referee, after a ruck broke up in anger in the second half.

Spreadbury had no doubt that Scott was to blame. “He went down and put two knees into the small of the back of a Leicester player,” he said. “It could have been very severe.”

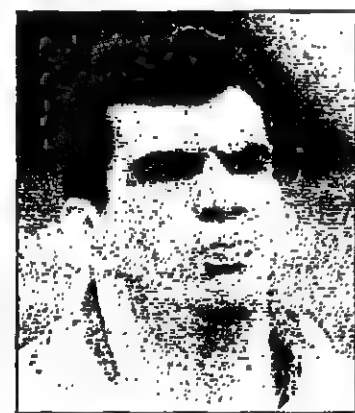
Scott, who won a Scotland cap against Australia in 1992, will receive an automatic four-week suspension and has already been removed from the Scotland A team for whom he was going to play against France A in Glasgow on Friday.

He said that his sending-off, the first of his career, had shocked him and he denied kneeling an opponent, Oscar Whingham, claiming he was trying to turn the player in order to secure the ball. It had been his

league debut for Orrell, having joined them from Dunfermline.

Two other players had been shown yellow cards earlier—John Russell, the Orrell prop, for raking in the twentieth minute and Graham Rowntree, the Leicester prop, for illegal use of the boot in the thirtieth. Orrell are clearly not good card players: they collected two yellow when the system was introduced the previous week.

It had not been a violent game, with both sides producing some enterprising play. The forward charges were, however, often ferocious and the tackling was, in the



Johnson: commanding

main, of the bone-crunching variety. Leicester won by two goals and five penalty goals to a goal, a try and three penalty goals to stay two points behind Bath, the league leaders. They also equalled their club record, set in the 1902-03 season, of 21 successive home wins.

Dean Richards, that pillar of their back row, having pulled out with influenza, Martin Johnson took over the Leicester captaincy for the first time and celebrated by having another commanding game.

Leicester always looked the better-organised team even though, in Dewi Morris, Orrell had the man of the match. He opened their scoring with a fine try but Leicester led 16-5 at half-time through a try by Kilford and Harris’s kicking.

The score had reached 22-8 before Orrell were revived by a Naylor try and Langford’s boot. But a push-over try from Tarbuck, converted by Harris, who picked up 19 points altogether, finally finished off the visitors.

SCORES: Leicester: Three Kilford, Tarbuck, Conversion: Harris (2). Penally goals: Harris (2).
ORRELL: T. Naylor, S. Hadeney, S. Punter, D. Edwards, A. McAdam, J. Harris, A. Kardon, G. Rowntree, R. Cochrane, D. Gierth, D. Whingham, M. Pople, M. Johnson, N. Baze, C. Tarbuck.
LEICESTER: S. Langford, J. Naylor, J. Wynn, P. Johnson, A. Hoadley, P. Harris, D. Morris, P. Whistam, M. Scott, J. Russell, D. Cochrane, C. Cochrane, C. Sheasby, J. Naylor, J. Baze.
REFEREE: A. Spreadbury (Somerset).

Bath flattered by late burst

Bath 26
Northampton 6

BY PETER BILLS

NOT until Tony Swift scouted into the left corner of the Recreation Ground for his 15th try for the club could Bath be certain of a victory most had regarded as inevitable.

With only 11 minutes remaining, Northampton had restricted the Courage League champions to a slender 12-6 advantage. Those first 69 minutes gave the struggling Midlands club encouragement for the remainder of the season.

But should Northampton read so much into that evidence? I would suggest not. While it could be argued that they sustained a spirited team performance which surprised Bath, the Midlands were deluding themselves if they felt they had been near Bath’s equal.

Brian Ashton, the Bath coach, had said all week that the match would be a test of his side’s attitude, with many other distractions, and he was right. Bath did enough to secure two more league points, but no more. Their concentration ebbed and flowed.

There was rarely any sustained forward driving or penetration behind the scrum, despite the liveli-

ness of their new scrum half, Olsen. Northampton offered a workmanlike display which contained Bath for long periods. But in terms of creativity and attacking thrust they showed little.

Their perfunctory league placing is not misleading. They are a side without the quality needed at this level. Beal did his best but a blanket of moderation covered the rest. Clarke’s loss through concussion with 20 minutes to go forced Hynes to hook. But it was the inspiration of Rodder and Bayfield that was most missed.

Bath scored 14 points through two



Swift: decisive score

converted tries in the final 11 minutes. But before that, Callard had missed two simple penalties, one in front of the posts, and Guscott, of all people, had squandered a try he would normally score in his sleep. The break he made for the opening, after 54 minutes, came from a standing start and was described by Ashton as “the finest break I’ve seen from a back in three years”.

The defence had been ruptured single-handed by the time Guscott reached the final defender, with de Glanville and Swift unmarked outside him. 15 yards from the Northampton line. But passing in such circumstances clearly seemed too predictable for the England genius. He tried to dummy and score himself only to be caught on the line.

Geoghegan, forever voracious in his appetite for work, scored the other try from Olsen’s free kick. But Bath were weary mentally long before they were physically done.

SCORES: Bath: Three Swift, Geoghegan, Conversion: Callard (2). Penally goals: Callard (2). Northampton: Penally goals: Guscott (2).
BATH: J. Callard, A. Swift, P. de Glanville, J. Guscott, S. Geoghegan, R. Rodder, M. Olsen, D. Hynes, J. Adams, J. Hogg, M. Hogg, N. Peden, A. Robinson, S. O’Connell.
NORTHAMPTON: N. Beal, C. Moir, P. Peden, M. Olsen, M. Thompson, P. Gage, S. Taylor, M. Hynes, A. Clarke, M. Lewis, J. Cassell, G. Webster, J. Phillips, B. Routledge, G. Seely, A. Gallagher. Temporary replacements for Thompson (40 min): Clarke replaced by M. Volland (80), Cassell replaced by S. Poole (70).

Fallen giants living in fear

Moseley 11
Wakefield 16

BY JOHN HOPKINS

AT HALF-TIME at the Reddings it was possible to close your eyes and imagine you were back in Moseley’s prime. Floodlights illuminated the distinguished old ground, the scene of so many famous matches. There was an air of expectancy, feet were stamped on the wooden floor of the stand and it seemed all you could hear were thick Brummie accents.

Sadly, though, Moseley are not what they used to be. There were many empty seats in the stand, which would not have been the case in the golden years. The reason is that the club is sliding downwards and is now dangerously near the bottom of the second division of the Courage Clubs Championship.

Wakefield, on the other hand, are still tight-headed after victory over Gloucester in the Pilkington Cup. This victory by Wakefield means that Moseley have won only eight points from 11 games. Although that is four more

than Coventry, the bottom club and favourites to drop to the third division, Moseley still live in trepidation.

Club officials are finding that when things start to go wrong, they really go wrong. Kicks, which in other, better, times would curl inside a post, now bend past the outside or, worse still, hit an upright. Tries are disallowed. In a 50-50 situation the advantage goes to the other side.

“We have lost a lot of forwards and we are struggling to hang on to the good young players we have,” Nigel Morris, a genial, welcoming figure at Moseley for several decades, said.

There are times when it seems that nothing more can go wrong—and then it does. The first team hooker was injured before the game against Saracens nine days ago. No problem. The reserve hooker would be drafted in. The trouble was, he was not fit. All right then, what about the third-choice hooker? He was not available. The result was that Moseley faced the leaders of the second division with a teenage hooker, their fourth choice. As it happened, he played well, as he did again

on Saturday but, within a few minutes against Wakefield, it had happened again.

Chris Dossett, the Moseley full back, was over-ambitious near his own line, found himself having to kick when he did not want to and missed touch. Wakefield ran the ball and with an overlap set up a soft try for Richard Thompson.

In a way that was the story of the game, Wakefield led by seven points, then, before Moseley began to claw their way back by playing as well as they can. And they can play well as their loss to Northampton in the Cup by only 16-6 suggests.

There is no self-pity or lack of determination at Moseley. Morris was philosophical at the final whistle. “We didn’t deserve to win,” he said. “But we don’t deserve to go down. We are too good for that.”

SCORES: Moseley: Try: Anderson. Penally goals: Carr (2). Wakefield: Try: Thompson. Conversion: Jackson. Penally goals: Jackson (2).
MOSELEY: C. Dossett, E. Anderson, A. Kerr, J. Bonney, D. Payne, M. Birch, G. Broomfield, R. Fuller, S. Caley, N. Webster, N. Morris, G. Watson, M. Bright, R. Robinson, S. Owen.
WAKEFIELD: M. Jackson, P. Weiss, P. Maynard, A. Metcalfe, R. Thompson, R. Pope, D. Scully, R. Latham, T. Gerrard, A. Day, N. Green, S. Croft, P. Stewart, K. Tait, M. Gosses.
REFEREE: C. Harrison (East Midlands).

Sharp’s back injury helps Hilton to cap

WHILE the English and Welsh camps worried that flu might deplete their ranks before next weekend’s five nations’ championship matches, Scotland know they will be without Alan Sharp, the Bristol prop, for Saturday’s meeting with Canada at Murrayfield (David Hands writes).

Sharp left the field during Bristol’s defeat by Sale after heavy bruising in the area of the prolapsed disc which has been troubling him. The Scottish selectors have replaced him with Bath’s David Hilton, the butcher from Bristol, who wins his first cap.

It was only last autumn that Hilton took up his Scottish qualification, appearing for the Scottish Exiles and in two A internationals, against the South Africans and Italy. Ironically, Hilton, 24, only left Bristol for Bath in 1992 when Sharp returned to the club from a flirtation with Clifton.

England, who open the championship against Ireland at Lansdowne Road, are

hoping the two Leicester forwards, Dean Richards and Martin Johnson, will be fit. Richards withdrew from his club’s match against Orrell with flu but hopes to have shaken it off by Wednesday, when England re-assemble.

Yesterday, at Twickenham, Jack Rowell, the manager, was more concerned that Johnson’s recurring hamstring problem would affect one of his key lineout forwards.

Should neither play, then Steve Ojomoh and Simon Shaw will step up but there was guarded optimism from the management who were happy that both props, Jason Leonard and Victor Ubogu, completed their weekend’s work unscathed and that Tony Underwood’s leg injury has cleared up.

Wales, who play France in Paris, will hope for similar fortune when they train in Cardiff this evening. Neither Phil Davies nor Wayne Proctor could play this weekend because of a virulent strain of flu.

Gregory saves the day

Richmond 15
Otley 14

BY BARRY THORNBURGE

OTLEY, who began the day in second place in the third division of the Courage Clubs Championship, promised little and delivered less—except, for one moment of inspiration, —at the Athletic Ground on Saturday, and have only themselves to blame for failing to beat a Richmond side devoid of try-scoring ideas.

With only Bedford of the top five winning, the results may not ultimately affect Otley’s promotion prospects, but their inability to overcome a team that had posted only one previous league victory this winter, and that at bottom-placed Exeter, will concern them, and was further proof that they do not perform on the road anything like the way they do at Cross Green.

Figures will show that Peter Rutledge, the Otley full back, normally so accurate with the boot, was successful with only three of seven kicks at goal, while John Gregory landed five of his seven for Richmond. The facts, however, are that

even when Otley dominated territorially in the second half, they lacked penetration and rarely released second-phase ball swiftly, allowing Phil Della-Savina, a shining light on a gloomy afternoon, a field day around the fringes.

Richmond’s triumph at Exeter was the result of the domination of the lineouts by Geoff Sage and Paul Carr, and an 80-minute concentration span, which had been absent in the first half of the season, resulting in five defeats by six points or fewer. Both elements were evident against Otley, but it was Richmond’s refusal to accept defeat which saw them home.

Otley’s high point came after 16 minutes when Flint chipped over a flat defence and Melville won the race to the corner. A penalty goal by Rutledge on the stroke of half-time, after four failures, kept them flatteringly in touch with Gregory’s three goals for Richmond at the break.

After, it was a different matter. In a replica of the move that produced the try, Atkinson was only just outpaced by Greenwood when going for the corner; then, after 51 minutes, Rutledge had

the easiest of tasks to put Otley ahead. By taking play into the Richmond half, Otley closed the game down and were in total control, but with ten minutes to go, Gregory struck a penalty goal from almost halfway and the atmosphere changed.

As if by command, Otley’s passing began to click, and when Richmond killed the ball on 40 metres out, Rutledge obliged. That should have been it; before Christmas, it probably would have been. In silence, Hoad’s attempted dropped goal sailed left of the post: from the drop-out, Thompson secured possession.

With man and ball on the floor, Otley would not let him release—penalty. Closer to the posts this time, but never the less not easy. Enter Gregory, exit Otley.

SCORES: Richmond: Penally goals: Gregory (3). Otley: Try: Melville. Penally goals: Rutledge (2).
RICHMOND: J. Gregory, P. Greenwood, D. Elliot, M. Hilton, S. Brown, J. Hoad, S. Short, J. Foster, J. Outbott, D. Shaw, M. Fitzgerald, G. Sage, P. Carr, P. Della-Savina, J. Thompson.
OTLEY: P. Rutledge, S. Atkinson, J. Owend, J. Flint, G. Melville, S. Hewitt, M. Waddington, C. Baldwin, M. Barnett, S. Rice, S. Tisdall, C. Carr, D. Cook, A. Hargreaves, M. Hargreaves. Rutledge replaced by M. Winterbottom (76 min).
REFEREE: W. Melrose (Gloucester).

Bristol
captain
moved to
invoke
D-notis

BY GERALD DAVIES

To add to Wales's misery, Dewi Coates, from Neath Tertiary College, sustained a broken vertebra in his neck but was yesterday said to be making satisfactory progress at the Royal Infirmary Hospital in Cardiff.

After Carrington and Jarvis had exchanged penalties on

NEW ZEALAND SCHOOLBOYS: M Carrington (King's College, Auckland); D Howard (Auckland GS); B Miller (Kerikeri); L Macdonald (Marlborough Boys College); P Pate (De La Salle College); G Bant (De La Salle College); B White (King's College, Auckland); E Morgan (Gisborne Boys HS); B Morris (King's College, Auckland); S Johnstone (Otago Boys HS); P Wilson (Otago Boys HS); P Jenkins (Pangaroa HS); K Tukino (Wesley College, A. T. C. (Wellington College); B McLeod (Gisborne Boys HS).
Referee: C Muir (SPL).

Knole provides an historic backdrop for schoolboy runners in vain pursuit of a runaway winner from Somalia representing Trinity, Croydon

By JOHN GOODENOUGH

He barely seemed to be making contact with the ground, so light was his footfall. The 17-year-old from Trinity, Croydon also had little contact with the other runners. He was well clear after a mile and finished

Courteous and softly spoken, he admits: "I do not train much, I do not do a lot of mileage — a bit of speed-work." Kieron Cooper, the former England under-21 hockey international, who is

Yusuf trains best when he is pushed by Jonathan McCullum, a former Trinity boy, third in this event last year and, like the Somalian exile, a member of Croydon Harriers.

Their best-placed competitor, in third place, was Edward Matthews, who was fourth in the 1994 English

Results, page 30

Yusuf: aiming for track success for Britain

BY MEL WEBB



Gooch: costly tumble

The accident to Veldzeboer has left O'Reilly a more melancholy individual, however, and ultimately he was happy enough with third place. "I did OK, I think," he said. "Don't write me off for the European

Photograph, page 30

By SYDNEY FRISKIN

BY RICHARD EATON

The Russians went on to cause a surprise by reaching the final, but then lost 3-1 to Sweden, who thus completed a hat-trick of European National Cup titles.

By TANIYDA TALMOEPEAU

Tonga's style mixes parts of rugby union and rugby league — at present we are Pacific champions for both codes. We do not have many big players, so we try to play an entertaining game and we tackle

That tournament was good experience. Fili Finau and Daniel Manu came with Willie O from Australia and Mana Oni, David Manako and Charles Reichelmann from New Zealand, all players with top provincial experience which rubs off on our boys. Our greatest strength is probably in the production of loose forwards. Ferukinau was voted man

Tonga has been drawn in the same group as Auckland, Canterbury, Queensland and the Orange Free State and we hope for a warm-up game in South Africa, so that the players can find out about the effects of altitude — none of them has played there before. When Gram Fox came to inspect our grounds and facilities for the Super 10, he spent some time sharing goal-kicking secrets with our kickers.

Takitoa Taumoepeau is the secretary of the Tongan Rugby Union

The Russians went on to cause a surprise by reaching the final, but then lost 3-1 to Sweden, who thus completed a hat-trick of European National Cup titles.

EDUCATION

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FURTHER DETAILS from T.M. Taylor, M.A., Headmaster, Bromsgrove School, Bromsgrove, Warks B61 7DU.
Tel: 0527 579679. Fax: 0527 576177.

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for promising musicians who will contribute significantly to the musical life of the School. Recent successes include three pupils who have gained: Choral Exhibition to Cambridge; admission to Oxford to read Music and an Advanced Diploma in Clarinet.

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POSTS

THE KING'S SCHOOL GRANTHAM

The affiliated school of The Worshipful Company of Information Technologists

The Governors of The King's School invite applications for the post of

HEAD

following the retirement of Dr D Lee after 13 years of distinguished service to take up an appointment in the Public sector.

The King's School is a Grant Maintained Selective Grammar School with 860 boys on roll aged 11-18 years (including 65 Boarders).

The School has a long and proud history and has recently been designated a specialist Science and Technology College. The school has a strong academic record and has close links with Industry and Universities. Sport and extra curricular activities, (including the CCF), play a major role within the School.

The successful applicant will be expected to consolidate past developments and guide the school's future into the 21st Century. The preferred starting date for the appointment is September 1995. Salary within the range £40 - £45,000.

Application forms and further details can be obtained from the Headmaster's Secretary at the King's School, Brook Street, Grantham, NG31 6RP (Telephone: 0476 63180) CLOSING DATE 27 JANUARY 1995

Cranfield UNIVERSITY

SENIOR LECTURER/LECTURER IN MARKETING

Cranfield School of Management, one of Europe's leading Business Schools, is seeking to appoint a Senior Lecturer/Lecturer in Marketing. We are particularly looking to appoint a specialist in Industrial and Business-to-Business Marketing. In addition to providing expertise in these areas, the successful candidate would also be expected to teach marketing on a broader front on our MBA and executive development short courses.

It is likely that the successful candidate will have a PhD, or be near to completion, and will have a commitment to research and publication in his/her area of specialisation. International experience would be an advantage.

Particular emphasis in our selection criteria is placed upon classroom skills and the willingness to work as part of a team.

The appointment is for a permanent post but will initially be made for a period of three years with the intention of extension beyond this term. Salary will be up to £25,918/£30,751 pa depending on experience.

Application forms and further details are available from the Personnel Department, Cranfield University, Cranfield, Bedford MK43 0AL telephone 0234 750111 extension 2000 (answerphone), quoting reference number 50018/TL.

Informal enquiries may be addressed to Professor Martin Christopher, Head of Marketing and Logistics Group.

Closing date for receipt of applications: 10th February 1995.

SCHOOL OF MANAGEMENT

SENIOR APPOINTMENTS

UXBRIDGE COLLEGE

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Applications are invited for the post of Chief Executive due to the retirement of the present postholder on 31st August 1995.

THE COLLEGE

Uxbridge College is a major provider of Further Education in the West London area, with a student population of 3,000 FTEs, over 300 employees and an annual budget of £10 million. It occupies sites in both Uxbridge and Hayes and offers a wide spectrum of curriculum provision, vocational and commercial training.

THE POSITION

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This post will be filled by a dynamic individual with determination and vision. He/she must be a strategic thinker, have a solid academic background, strong management ability, and impeccable leadership and communication skills.

For further details and an application form please contact:

PERSONNEL SECTION, Uxbridge College, Park Road, Uxbridge, Middx. UB8 3HQ. Tel: (01895) 239411, ext. 310. Answer machines on SUNDAY ONLY (01895) 232131. Completed applications must be received by noon Friday, 10 February 1995

POSTS

HEADINGTON SCHOOL

OXFORD

The Governing Council of Headington School invites applications for the post of

HEAD

of this Girls' Independent GSA Boarding and Day School which will become vacant in August 1996

on the retirement of Miss E M Tucker MA

The School has about 770 pupils, 550 between the ages of 11 and 18 in the Senior School and 220 between the ages of 4 and 10 in the Junior School.

Applicants should be honours graduates and participating members of the Church of England.

Full details of the appointment, prospectus and application form may be obtained by writing to The Bursar, Headington School, Oxford OX3 0EL. Closing date for applications 31st March 1995.

UNIVERSITY APPOINTMENTS

University of Cambridge

Environmental Officer

The University wishes to appoint an Environmental Officer to take up appointment on 1 May 1995, or as soon as possible thereafter. The person appointed will be expected to play a central role in the development of environmental objectives for the University that recognise the legal requirements and national quality standards for the environment which are directly applicable to the University's activities. He or she will also be expected to encourage University staff and students to energy conservation; to take a major part in raising the awareness of the economical use of materials by increased efficiency of procedures, improved design, and recycling; and will advise on appropriate methods of waste disposal in order to minimise environmental damage. Applicants for the post should have an appropriate scientific qualification, together with experience in some aspect of environmental management. The post holder will liaise with staff and students throughout the University and report to a University Environment Committee and will be expected to possess good administrative as well as interpersonal skills.

The salary for the post is on the scale of £19,326 to £23,496 a year.

Further information may be obtained from the Registry, University Registry, The Old Schools, Cambridge, CB2 1TN, tel: 0223 332306, to whom applications marked "confidential", together with a curriculum vitae and the names of two referees, should be sent so as to reach him by 3 March 1995.

The University follows an equal opportunities policy.

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FACULTY OF LAW

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Informal enquiries may be made to the Dean of the Faculty, Professor C.J. Miller, Tel: 0121 414 3172 or fax 0121 414 3585.

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Application forms (returnable by 10th February 1995) and further particulars available from the Director of Staffing Services, The University of Birmingham, Edgbaston, Birmingham B15 2TT, telephone 0121 414 6483 (24 hours), quoting reference L778/95. Working towards equal opportunities

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EDUCATION

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UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD

University Offices

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Further particulars of the appointment may be obtained from the Deputy Registrar (Administration), University Offices, Wellington Square, Oxford, OX1 2JD (tel. 01865-270050), to whom applications, including a detailed curriculum vitae and the names and addresses of two referees, should be sent by 10 February 1995.

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The successful applicant will ideally be a graduate with energy and enthusiasm and willing to play a full part in the life of the College. Previous experience of fund-raising would be an advantage.

The appointment will be full-time for two years in the first instance and the salary package will be within the range £25,000 - £35,000.

Further particulars are available from the Bursar, Trinity Hall, Cambridge, CB2 1TJ, to whom applications, including the names of three referees, should be sent by 31 January 1995.

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POSTS

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EDUCATION

Quiet revolution at A level

Ben Preston reports on the way in which an examination seen as a cornerstone of quality has slowly changed

After withstanding impassioned demands for abolition for almost a decade, the 44-year-old A-level examination that ministers laud as the cornerstone of educational quality is on the brink of a quiet revolution.

The change is neither the response to the weighty deliberations of an expert committee, nor the outcome of any political initiative to modernise schooling. Instead, it is consumer-led and has gone virtually unnoticed beyond the confines of staffrooms and examination boards. Hundreds of schools and colleges are switching to new modular A-level courses that boast low failure rates and examine pupils as they go along.

But the trend is set to accelerate as more schools take advantage of the growth in such courses. Already, more than half the current A-level syllabuses in mathematics, science, geography, politics and modern languages are modular. Of 230 A-level courses registered in the past two years by the School Curriculum and Assessment Authority (SCAA), some 110 are modular.

Modular courses mark a radical break from the traditional A level. Conventionally, candidates prepare for two years before their studies climax with a series of final examinations which determine their grade. One in five fails. The new courses divide A levels into smaller courses. Pupils must then complete a certain number of these "modules" — usually four or six in a subject — in order to gain the qualification. This does not generally alter the way in which candidates are assessed. The balance between marks for coursework and formal examination remains similar for modular and conventional courses. However, what does change is the flexibility offered to the candidate.

Pupils are allowed up to four years in which to accumulate the requisite number of modules for an A level. During the course, they choose when to sit the examination for each module: at the end of the term in which they studied it; in the summer of their first year; as practice, or for at least 30 per cent of marks, at the end as they might for conventional A levels.

The key difference is that candidates can then rest individual papers if they are not satisfied with their grade. As one teacher explains: "If A level is the high jump, modularity allows people more than one chance to get over." Thus,

if a pupil needs a C grade for their first-choice university, they can try to bump up a D for a particular module by retaking it — several times, if necessary. Candidates only "cash in" their scores for each module when they are happy with their final, overall grade.

Modular courses can also offer students increased subject flexibility. Students starting a science course could, for example, eventually gain a qualification in physics, biology, chemistry or science depending on their choice from a menu of modules. Alternatively, they could "cash in" grades for three modules to get an A/S level. Pupils might start studying five subjects at A level and decide which to complete subsequently.

Critics worried that the conventional A level is too narrow and a mismatch with today's mass higher education system. They are rallying behind modularity as a way of bypassing the Government's veto on reform. Others are excited but recognise the problems the anticipated growth of modular courses will throw up — not least with Conservative backbenchers whose belief in the traditional A level is an article of faith.

Kathleen Tattersall, chief executive of the Northern Examinations and Assessment Board, whispers: "I don't want to say too loudly that A level is being changed, because some people might notice."

She argues that modular courses improve motivation because candidates can accurately measure their standard during a course and work harder to achieve targets.

The advent of modular courses could, in theory, she muses, bring a 100 per cent pass rate because pupils would not trade in modules until they were worth, at least, an E grade. The dangers of candidate and examiner fatigue, however, would need to be addressed to avoid an educational treadmill where schools had to organise formal examinations every month.

Dr John Marks, a council member of SCAA, is concerned that just as the Government is reducing the number of GCSE syllabuses to safeguard standards and ensure comparability, the growth of modular courses means that the tide is flowing in the opposite direction at A level. He worries that A level, a proven test of intellectual rigour and discipline, might be sacrificed because of the difficulties in policing standards across a multiplicity of modules.

Dr Marks's assertion that modular courses appear easier is supported by some guinea-pigs. Eugene Samuel, a sixth-former at South Hampstead High, an independent school in north London, is unimpressed by her modular mathematics course: "Students can learn a relatively small amount of material for a narrow exam, the content of which will not be repeated in other modules. I looked up some old questions from the 1980s and was completely at sea."



Dr Avis Mastin, left, an A-level biology tutor at Colchester Sixth Form College, with a pupil

Findings contained in an unpublished report for SCAA by the University of Newcastle upon Tyne will provide further ammunition for critics who believe modular courses are a soft touch compared with conventional A levels. An analysis of more than 7,000 candi-

dates with similar GCSE results showed that those who took modular mathematics courses gained one grade higher than the rest.

Some 25 per cent gained a grade A, 21 per cent got a B, 19 per cent a C and 18 per cent a D, comparing favourably with those on non-modular courses, where 19 per cent got an A, 15 per cent a B, 15 per cent a C and 16 a D. Supporters of modularity, however, will marshal the same figures to their cause: hard evidence that the new system rewards effort and encourages pupils to persevere with education.

For head teachers in the age of league tables, the prospect of

improved grades is compelling. The march of modular courses is evident at Colchester Sixth-Form College, one of the largest in England. Students taking a modular A/S level business studies course for the past two years have maintained a 100 per cent pass rate.

Jan Harker, the subject head, has been won over by the experiment and is currently deciding which of three new modular business studies courses she should introduce at A level. "We got much more out of our students on the modular course. The question now is whether we should introduce it for economics, a much more traditionally taught subject." It is a question many other teachers will be asking soon.

Sound method of learning

A new programme aims to improve literacy for both adults and children

THIS week will see another reminder of the shortcomings in literacy that still plague British adults. A survey by the Adult Literacy and Basic Literacy Unit is expected to show continuing problems in a variety of age groups.

But a Manchester academic has developed a new training programme that could produce real improvements for adults and children alike. Known as THRASS (The Handwriting Reading and Spelling Sequence), the scheme, developed by Alan Davies, an educational psychologist and a senior lecturer at Manchester Metropolitan University, is already in use in 12 Sheffield primary schools.

It was while working in Chester with a group of mothers returning to education after bringing up families that Mr Davies first encountered the literacy problems that affect six million adults in this country.

"A lot of intelligent women who had left school early had spelling and writing problems," the 38-year-old says. "What is more, they were misspelling the words in the same way." Three of the poor spellers in that Chester class justified his confidence in them by going on to graduate and qualify as teachers.

Mr Davies became critical of an education system that could produce such aberrations. "If the health service discovered there were six million women with, say, breast cancer, they would surely wonder if they had something in common," he suggests. Maybe teaching methods were at fault.

As a parent of two young children, he was interested in the processes of early learning. "I knew I could read and spell, but I didn't know what the process was about," he says. "When I looked into it, I decided they are fundamentally taught wrongly from the beginning."

The problem is that while there are 44 sounds, or phonemes, in the English language, there are only 26 letters to represent them. "If you tell children from the beginning that one letter has one sound it will not work." The "Q" in queue, for example, is not the same sound as the "Q" in cheque.

And to confuse matters, some sounds are represented by more

than one letter. "The 'G' in giant is the same sound as the 'J' in jam." It is not always helpful, then, to "sound out" letters.

Children who succeed under the present system abandon that process and learn to make successful guesses at words they do not know. Those who fail believe that there is some process they do not understand or assume they have faulty hearing.

When Mr Davies explains now to adults with literacy problems about the 44 sounds, they say, "No one ever told me." Some cry with relief.

"What has taken me eight years to work out is how to explain it in a formal people will understand." The package, which was published in May, costs £25, but, as its creator explains, all the written material can be photocopied and he recently used the video with 180 pupils.

And whereas the Reading Recovery Programme, in which Sheffield had already invested a deal of cash and time, depends on a one-to-one situation, a THRASS project leader can cope with six children in one half-hour session.

The first school to use Mr Davies's system as a whole school policy was St Mildred's Primary School, Stoke-on-Trent, where it had been introduced for one boy with problems associated with dyslexia.

The scheme has also been employed successfully for children with special learning needs and at a college run by the Spastics Society.

Overseas, the South African Government is evaluating the scheme's potential for coping with the new administration's adult literacy problems, and interest has been shown by the Jamaican and Barbadian authorities.

In Sheffield, Carol Sheehan, who has been co-ordinating the schools project since September, declares herself a firm fan of THRASS and would like to see its use extended.

"The authority is treating it as a pilot project and it will be evaluated in April," she says. "It is early days yet, but there's been an enthusiastic response from the teachers."

ALAN ROAD

Should daily religious assemblies remain compulsory in schools? Two experts give their views

A time to pass on a vision

Where there is no vision, the people perish.

One of the fundamental purposes of daily assembly is to communicate a vision: to open the eyes of those who attend to the possibilities that exist within the human spirit. William Blake wrote in the 18th century:

"To the eye of a miser a guinea is far more beautiful than the sun and a bag worn with the use of money has more beautiful proportions than a vine filled with grapes. The tree of joy is in the eyes of others only a green thing which stands in the way. As a man is, so he sees."

Two centuries later, young people see the world as obsessed with material concerns. Today's headlines boast a £7 million transfer fee for a footballer, and a £500,000 deal involving two new books. Bags of money assume beautiful proportions. Green things which stand in the way are bulldozed to make space for roads.

Assemblies must try to put such things in perspective. They have a central role in cultivating a sense of imagination, and a vision of spirituality.

We in schools have a legal responsibility for the spiritual and moral education of our pupils. Daily assemblies reinforce the values the school upholds. They emphasise the

unique worth of each individual within the community and make explicit what is considered praiseworthy. The sharing of positive experience is immensely important to all young people: to the many who come from the secure, confident backgrounds as well as to those who do not feel valued, whose concept of what is praiseworthy may be confined to purely selfish or material gain.

Assemblies raise spiritual and moral issues in a context that enables discussion of sensitive, often highly personal and challenging, questions to follow naturally. For some pupils, this is the only forum in which such questions may be articulated. Such opportunities are essential in schools, for communities which encompass a wide diversity of religious belief, as well as of un-

belief. We provide a daily challenge to the intellectual development of our pupils: is their spiritual development less important?

To prepare an assembly every day for an audience of some 1,000 young people and a staff is a responsibility and a privilege. It is also one of the most difficult tasks we do.

Church sermons, preached to a willing and witnessing congregation, are usually based on the biblical text for the day. In schools, where both willingness and witness may be lacking, there is less com-



Fulham Cross School, London: for some pupils assembly is the only forum where sensitive questions can be asked

THE CASE AGAINST Serving God or tradition?

The issue of school worship is in the news again, and it won't go away. The questions it raises have existed as long as the present system, and will continue as long as it continues.

Like so much in Britain, school worship is there because it is there. How did it get there?

When our system of national education was developed during the 19th century, this had been a Christian country for more than a thousand years. What education there was had always been dominated by religious interests,

and they fought to preserve their monopoly against the growing intervention by political interests. It was accepted by everyone — except a few Nonconformists, freethinkers and socialists — that all schools should have religious worship and religious instruction, and it was assumed that this should be Christian. Free adults could no longer be forced to worship, but captive schoolchildren could.

To satisfy potential objections from parents, it was agreed that religion in schools should not be "distinctive of any particular denomination".

and there should be a "conscience clause" allowing parents to withdraw children from worship or instruction. The system we have now is essentially the unsystematic compromise achieved more than a century ago.

The main effect of withdrawal is to separate conscientious objectors from the rest; so it is seldom used, and in practice worship "wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character" is compulsory for almost all schoolchildren.

Is this acceptable? Many people follow non-Christian religions. This may seem a minor problem — it is a simple matter to arrange non-Christian worship, and anyway non-Christian religions are followed by only 3 per cent of the population — but it means that worship is a divisive force in many schools. Many more people have no religion. This is a major problem. It involves about a third of the popula-

tion, and it isn't a simple matter to arrange non-religious worship — if there can be such a thing. Many teachers have replaced religious worship with various kinds of secular assembly. However desirable such developments may be, they are technically illegal.

A more serious question is whether religious worship is an educational activity at all, any more than political meetings would be. Many educational and religious experts think not. Sincere Christians know that compulsory worship is a contradiction in terms, and strict Christians

should know that public prayers are authoritatively condemned in the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew, vi).

Most parents and politicians, and many commentators, say they want school worship, but how many go to church themselves or even say prayers at home, and how many would welcome compulsory worship at their place of work? After all, fewer than half the people in this country ever voluntarily take part in any religious ceremony, and only a tenth do so regularly.

The most Christian part of the United Kingdom is Northern Ireland, where religious education is one of the main factors in the polarisation of the communities. Several

Christian countries have secular education; and the United States, which is far more Christian than Britain, has a constitutional ban on religion in state schools.

School worship is said to be part of our national heritage, but isn't a more valuable part of that heritage the religious freedom we won three centuries ago, and doesn't freedom of religion include freedom from compulsory religion? We are a plural society, and the state schools should serve the whole community, bringing children together rather than driving them apart.

Surely a partial reform is necessary, at least to make school worship genuinely voluntary.

Pupils could opt in rather than opt out, like trade unionists; worship could be practised only outside the formal timetable, like other voluntary activities; worship and assembly could be separated. But a total reform would be preferable.

The removal of the legal straitjacket would bring a breath of fresh air to the whole area: freeing teachers and pupils to make assembly a true centre of school life.

NICOLAS WALTER

● The author is the managing director of the Rationalist Press Association.

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The on-line educational services from Times Newspapers have expanded with the arrival on the Internet of The Times Higher Education Supplement. Readers will have access to the THES's recruitment advertising three days ahead of publication, and summaries of the week's news, features, reviews and opinion pieces. The service is at gopher.timeshigher.newsint.co.uk. This page and other sections of The Times are available on-line through Delphi UK. Details by e-mail from ukservice@delphi.com or on 071-757-7080.

Let's have fair play for the under-fives

Helen Penn describes some disturbing anomalies in private and state nursery education and asks why it should be so

Privatising nursery education, as the Adam Smith Institute suggested last week, is not such a radical idea. For the 52 per cent of working parents who have children under five, it is only the private market which meets their needs.

The state nursery education system operates a part-day, part-year service which covers 26 per cent of three and four-year-olds. If used, it has to be supplemented with privately paid-for care, or help from obliging relatives.

The new BBC series on nannies illustrates how common a dilemma it is for the middle classes to arrange satisfactory private care. For them, the problem is not state or private, but how to choose within the private — how to find a satisfactory nanny or private nursery. The problem for low income or single-parent families is not only in finding care and education, but in paying for it.

Not much is known about the quality or standards of private market provision for under-fives. In America there has been considerable research on home-sitters (nannies) and private nurseries, and much of it is worrying. It indicates that quality is very variable, and related to price, and that poor quality care has a poor outcome for children.

The most comprehensive review of American private day nurseries, the National Childcare Staffing Study carried out in 1988 on 227 nurseries, suggested that in poorer quality nurseries, staff morale was low, and staff turnover very high. In the sample as a whole there was a staff turnover rate in excess of 41 per cent in one year.

The study concluded that the single most important determinant of quality for children was the rate of pay of the workers. Subsequent research has indicated that staff turnover rates have risen, and has confirmed the relationship between the quality of the staff and children's development.

However, in America there is no national legislation on the operation of day nurseries. In the UK some protection is afforded by the 1989 Children Act, which lays down minimum regulatory conditions. These conditions are far less generous than those required for private nursery education.

There is no requirement, as in state education legislation, to employ qualified teachers and nursery nurses; and the space requirements are less than those in operation in state nursery education. Only in the matter of adult to child ratios are the requirements more stringent. In the private sector, there must be one adult for every eight children



Beyond the means of poor parents? A private nursery in Wandsworth, south London

aged three to five; in the State sector the ratio is 13:1. Set against that, however, is the availability of auxiliary help. Cleaners, janitors and secretaries are provided to supplement the work of the care and education staff. No teacher would be expected to clean out the rooms and take care of the building or do any secretarial work.

In the private sector, the auxiliary staff are legally dispensable, and their work is frequently done by their everyday job of looking after children. In short, in the private sector less well-trained staff look

after children in a smaller space, and have to clean up as well.

The requirements for inspection also differ between state nursery education and the private sector. State provision is subject to Ofsted inspection. This is infrequent, but extremely thorough, lasting several days, with a team of inspectors focusing on the quality of the education offered, in line with latest government circulars. The report is then published and made available to staff, parents and anyone who wishes to see it.

In the private sector, the Children Act requires annual inspections, but these are often cursory, involving a half-day or day visit from a person not necessarily qualified or experienced in education or childcare. It often focuses on health and safety issues, and those aspects of the regulations which are unequivocal, such as the cleanliness of the toilets, or the perceived adult-staff ratios. These reports are regarded as confidential between the owner and the inspector, and there is no obligation to publish them. Parents may not even know they exist.

In a small study carried out for *Panorama* last year, we found private nurseries to be of very variable quality. The best nurseries were very good indeed, rivaling or surpassing what is available in the public sector and offering, in addition, a flexibility that the rigid hours of public nursery education cannot begin to match. The worst nurseries were undoubtedly bad, with poor educational practices, inadequate premises, young, poorly trained staff and a high staff turnover — in two cases more than 90 per cent turnover in one year.

Out of 105 staff studied, 79 held a nursery nurse qualification, and four were teachers; the rest were untrained. For trained staff, the average weekly take-home pay was £135 (Social Trends lists the average

wage for a woman as £130 per week). Conditions of service were poor, only one worker in the sample had a pension entitlement and many did not have written contracts, or sick pay or holiday entitlements. Only a very few staff from one nursery belonged to a union. By contrast teachers and nursery nurses in state nursery education have, through their unions, relatively generous negotiated pay settlements and secure working conditions.

The private market, therefore, offers far less favourable conditions to staff than the state sector. If the American findings are true, and there is a direct relationship between quality of care and education and the level of pay and conditions of work of staff, then we should worry about the expansion of the private market. We should also worry about the difference in regulatory requirements.

Why should the private sector be allowed to offer so much less than state sector nursery education? We should also worry about the inappropriateness of nursery provision in the state sector. How can we, in this day and age, justify a continuation of an education system which offers no more than two and a half hours a day of nursery education to children of working parents? A better balance between care and education, state and private provision, has to be found.

The author lectures at the London University Institute of Education.

Hoping for sweet success at Easter

Despite the recession, the popularity of revision courses continues to grow as their format becomes more sophisticated

The recession might have been expected to blow a hole in the market for Easter revision courses. Whatever their record for rescuing GCSE and A-level candidates, they still cost hundreds of pounds.

In reality, however, the demand for places has continued to grow rapidly. There are now more than 60 schools and colleges in the market, as well as countless individual teachers offering intensive coaching over the holiday.

With university offers predicted to be at least as high as last year, there is little reason to believe that the bubble will burst yet. About 5,000 students are expected to enrol this year, and they will have more courses than ever from which to choose.

One reason is that the revision business is becoming more sophisticated

as students and their parents become more selective. A number of colleges have followed last year's lead by the four Mander Portman Woodward institutions in offering courses tailored to particular examining boards.

Joe Ruston, MPW's chairman, says: "The new 'board specific' courses must be the shape of things to come because parents can be sure that they will be totally relevant to their needs. You will not be wasting time on texts that are not on your particular syllabus, for example."

How to find the right course is parents' perennial concern. There are obvious starting points, such

as the number of teaching hours and staff qualifications, but there is no official inspection or regulation. Some colleges are recognised by the British Accreditation Council and some principals belong to the Council of Independent Further Education, but individual courses are not monitored.

John Bone, of Wellington College, in Berkshire, one of the main providers among independent schools, says: "We are desperate to get an accreditation system going,

but a lot of the colleges are far from keen. We think parents need to know what they are getting for their money."

At Wellington, that means £375 for a six-day residential course. Wellington has been running revision programmes for a decade, and now has more than 300 places on residential and non-residential courses. With A-level students working from 9am to 9pm, with two hours' break in the afternoon, the college brochure's warning

that "this is no laggard's paradise" seems particularly apt.

There is no doubt, however, that some of the programmes on offer this Easter will be much less rigorous. In particular, some of the organisations operating only at Easter are regarded with considerable suspicion by the established providers.

"As a general rule, it must be safer to go for a college that runs all year round," Mr Ruston says. "It is still terribly easy for cowboys

to make money over Easter and disappear as soon as the course has finished."

Gabbitts Educational Consultants, based in London, offers free advice on revision courses, making recommendations from a list of more than 30 colleges. Wendy Johnson, the marketing officer, says: "We stick to places we know well and which have a track record in getting people through. Most are in London, but there are some in Oxford and Cambridge, Bristol, Birmingham and Manchester."

Gabbitts has had relatively few inquiries so far this year, but business usually picks up after the February half-term, when parents

are able to make a realistic assessment of their children's prospects. The courses may look expensive, but many parents compare the cost of a year retaking A levels, and decide to take the plunge.

Courses are now attracting a wide variety of students, from the high-flyers aiming for medical schools to those who are flitting with failure. The colleges also report growing numbers of state school pupils enrolling, as their parents devote something of what they have saved in fees to a late, hopeful push for the best possible grades. Results from the established courses suggest that the money spent usually is not wasted.

JOHN OLEARY

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Britain pins Chinese hopes on inland area

FROM JAMES PRINGLE
IN PEKING

BRITAIN hopes to increase trade with China after the signing of a £1 billion export credit to UK companies investing in the grimy central Chinese industrial city of Wuhan.

The British arrangement with Wuhan, signed last October in a memorandum of understanding (MOU), has been kept quiet until now, according to British officials, because one of the British companies in the transaction, which is in the telecommunications industry, did not wish to be publicly named.

Other diplomats in China say that the agreement was to have been trumpeted during a visit to Britain, if it materialises, of Qian Qichen, the Chinese foreign minister. The Chinese have been wary of Britain over the controversy of increased democratisation in Hong Kong, and bilateral business has suffered.

Most European countries, however, have been anxious to move beyond human rights issues to those of straight business in the world's biggest emerging market.

"So far, no business has been done under the MOU," a British embassy official said. "This is more about relationship building and sending signals that we are serious about doing business with Wuhan."

To emphasise its commitment to the China market, Britain has spent £45,000 on a technology centre at a leading university in Wuhan, which is away from the booming coastal provinces, but which, as a communications hub, is the terminus of the Yangtze river from Chungking, the most important city in Sichuan province.

"Everyone is concentrating on the coastal provinces," said a British official. "The idea is to focus our effort away from these provinces. We have ideas for expansion in other inland provinces."

Foreign companies have become wary of China recently, with serious defaulting on loans, such as with Lehman Brothers' fight to recover \$100 million in alleged bad debts from two Chinese companies.

Wuhan will benefit from construction of the huge Three Gorges Dam across the Yangtze, west of the city of 7 million people. Work has begun on the project, likely to make central China an economic powerhouse, say analysts.

Leisure boom pays dividends

A SEA change in consumers' spending habits is providing a significant boost to the leisure industry, according to Paul Slattery, of Kleinwort Benson.

He said: "While retailers complain of sluggish high street spending, everybody is putting out their hats and coats and going out to restaurants, hotels, night clubs, football games; you name it, they're going to it." All good news for leisure groups reporting this week.

FIRST LEISURE: Falling attendances at tennis bowling alleys will be the only real downside when the coastal resorts and nightclubs group, which owns Blackpool Tower, unveils final results on Tuesday. NatWest Securities reckons that a strong performance over the summer months will have lifted sales and profits in the coastal resorts by some 9 per cent. Nightclub profits are likely to be around 12 per cent higher. Analysts will be watching out for news on early trading at the two recently opened clubs at Park Royal and Kingston. Attendances have been falling faster than the pins themselves at the group's bowling alleys. First Leisure is taking steps to slim down the cost base, and reducing entrance prices.

NatWest predicts a like-for-like decline in sales of 12 per cent and a profits fall of 21 per cent. Kleinwort forecasts group profits of £37.3 million, compared with £31.8 million last time, boosting earnings per share from 14.8p to 16.5p. NatWest is more conservative: £36 million and 15.9p. BZW forecasts £37.1 million.

STANLEY LEISURE: The betting shops and casinos group, which reports interim results on Wednesday, is benefiting from increasing deregulation of the

gaming industry. BZW, the house broker, forecasts half-time profits of £7.2 million, compared with £5.4 million.

PELICAN GROUP: The restaurant boom is good news for the Dome restaurant chain, which is particularly well placed to take advantage of the upturn in demand. Kleinwort Benson expects the interim profits, due today, to have doubled to £5 million.

EUROCAMP: The opening of the Channel Tunnel will no doubt turn out to be good news in the long term for the company, a point it will no doubt be anxious to stress when unveiling full-year figures today.

These are expected to reveal pre-tax profits of between £8 million and £8.8 million against

£6.25 million last year. Shareholders are likely to be rewarded with an increase in the dividend from 9.75p to 10.2p. The figures will have been boosted by vastly improved booking levels during 1994. Brokers will also want

to quiz the group on early 1995 bookings for the key summer holiday period after some encouraging noises from some of its rivals.

TOMKINS: The widely diversified industrial conglomerate kicks off the week with half-year figures later today. Pre-tax profits are expected to show a healthy improvement, with brokers pencilling in £107 million, against £93.8 million. They will also be looking for evidence of an improving trend in many of the group's interests, ranging from guns to bread, building products and lawnmowers.

Ranks Hovis McDougall, which it acquired several years ago, is the biggest contributor to profits. The rationalisation of



Tough going at Ranks Hovis McDougall for Gregory Hutchings, chief executive of Tomkins

RHM, continues apace and should guarantee further profits growth. Hopes that the business will begin to see an improvement in market conditions after a difficult few years seem unlikely. Margins are expected to remain under pressure, with little likelihood of price increases other than through new products. The fluid control division has seen no improvement in trading, although in the US the heating, ventilation and air conditioning operations are experiencing signs

of an upturn on the commercial side and last year's 3 per cent price rise at ASC appears to have held.

COLORVISION: The recent trading update painted a picture of tough market conditions with margins still feeling the strain as consumer confidence continues to bump along the bottom. Those problems are likely to be magnified when interim figures from Colorvision, the Liverpool retailer of televisions and video record-

ers, are unveiled on Wednesday. Even the most optimistic forecasts can only muster a breakeven situation, although that will be a drastic improvement on the loss of £1.26 million last year.

The problems built up steadily as the group last year, culminating in a profits warning during April with profits collapsing from £1.8 million to just £203,000 and the dividend cut. Brokers admit that the going remains tough and that the group still has a long way to go.

Results and statistics

TODAY

Interline: Altrust Scotland Investment, Bromsgrove Industries, Carole Engineering Group, Explura Holdings, Pelican Group, Tormans, Platts Eurocamp, Robert H Lowe, Simms, Soundtrac, Economic statistics: producer price index (December).

TOMORROW

Interline: Court Commercial, Election House, Nobo Group, Northern Industrial Improvement Trust, Peel Holdings, St David's Investment Trust, J Saville Gordon, Williamson Tea, Wyke Group, Platts Central Motor Auctions, Chase Manhattan, Citicorp, Everards, First Choice Holidays, Intel Corp, South Country Homes, Unilever, Economic statistics: CBI survey of distributive trades (December).

WEDNESDAY

Interline: Abertoth Split Level Trust, Beside Hunter, Colorvision, Martin Shelton Group, Photo-Me International, SelectTV, Stanley Leisure Organisation, Platts: First Leisure, London & Clydesdale Holdings, London Scottish Bank, Lookers, RCO Holdings, Second Consolidated Trust, Economic statistics: public sector borrowing requirement (December), retail prices index (December), quarterly economic accounts (third quarter), labour market statistics: unemployment and unfilled vacancies (December), average earnings index (November-December), employment, hours, productivity and unit wage costs; industrial disputes; agricultural land prices in Wales (third quarter), annual agricultural land price in Wales (1994); labour force survey rapid release key results (August) (September-November).

THURSDAY

Interline: ARI Group, Barbour Index, Carpetright, Mclay Securities, William Hanson, Rubicon Group, Platts: British Toot Eclairing, Brunner Investment Trust, Hill & Smith Holdings, Necronix Technology, Economic statistics: motor vehicle production (December) machine tools (November) retail sales (December).

FRIDAY

Interline: Data General Corporation (Q1), Park Food Group, Platts: Abertoth Smaller Companies Trust, LPA Industries, PWS Holdings, Selective Assets, Economic statistics: Building societies monthly figures (December); provisional estimates of m4 and counterparties (December); major British banking groups' monthly statement (December); financial statistics (January).

The Sunday Times: Buy Tomkins. The Observer: Buy ISB, Sticks. Avoid The Rank Organisation. The Independent on Sunday: Buy The Rank Organisation, Goode Durrant, Next, Crampin Holdings. The Sunday Telegraph: Buy National Express, Eurocamp. Avoid Ballychub, Gold. The Mail on Sunday: Buy Williams, Peer Black. The Sunday Express: Buy Hanson, Sell Dixon.

statistics, which are expected to show another sizeable drop in headline unemployment of perhaps 32,000 compared with November's decrease of 43,400. Average earnings growth for November is expected to have remained unchanged at October's 4 per cent. Wednesday is rounded off with figures for the public sector borrowing requirement for December are also released. Friday rounds off the week with the latest broad money supply figures and bank and building society lending for December.

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Eddie George for prime minister? Not in England perhaps. In Italy, asking the central bank's experienced number two to run the country, rather than to become Governor, scarcely caused a ripple — except in the financial markets, where prices surged to greet "one of us". Lamberto Dini quickly promised a government of technocrats free of party ties.

The joys of a supposedly apolitical businessman's government have excited the British establishment from time to time. During the Wilson years, one press person foolishly used the front page to call for such leaders, ostensibly because the real ones were avoiding tough economic decisions. The businessmen, it was assumed, would take tough-but-fair non-nonsense measures. To no one's astonishment but his own, he was swiftly dethroned.

Another bout of fantasy surfaced in the early Thatcher years, about the time when the nascent Social Democratic Party, as yet untainted by policies, won majority support in opinion polls. In this case, the Government had taken tough, non-nonsense measures, but these were driving the economy rapidly into its worst post-war slump. If a board of directors replaced it, the clubmen mused, they would steer a sensible pragmatic course, guided by the twin-line national interest rather than fancy theoretical ideas. How the businessmen would have addressed the invasion of the Falklands was, thankfully, never tested.

Challenge of history for steady Lamberto



GRAHAM SEARJEANT

Shortly afterwards, I chanced to interview a prominent figure in the business establishment who, it appeared to me, would have expected a prominent role in this business administration, possibly even the one. A decent cover. But I came away hoping that no one in their right mind would ever think of such a thing again. For better or worse, British businessmen are generally not corporatists, members of some elite network who happen to be running industry rather than a bank, university, or ministry.

Most are individualists, successful but impatient dictators who drive their boards with a can-do mentality that brooks no sustained objection. They have little time or inclination to see things in the round or to pay more than lip-service to anything beyond the main priority. In tough times like recessions or emergencies, such methods are the best; for long-term strategy, perhaps not. But the predominant culture of today's chief executives would not even allow them to run a professional partnership without strife, let alone the body politic. Voting partners have to be won over, a tiresome if better arrangement, whereas executives,

or Cabinet juniors, can usually be relied on to pretend they agree with the boss's pronouncements.

Even in Italy, spiritual home of corporatism, governments of technocrats do not generally last long. Their job is to push through the necessary tough measures before squabbling politicians resume their accustomed places. If Signor Dini manages to form a government, his priority will be the state pension cuts his predecessor shelved in the wake of massive public demonstrations. Yet it is no accident that Italy tends to thrust forward the central bankers it so reveres. The structure of public finances, bizarre by normal

European standards, often works well enough, but requires periodic injections of confidence more than all-round good government.

For decades, Italy has combined Nordic levels of public spending — 56 per cent of gross domestic product last year — with Mediterranean levels of tax-collecting. Result: chronic deficits. The annual borrowing requirement has averaged more than 10 per cent of GDP stretching back to the 1970s. But much of this was used to finance growth of the vast state industrial sector. Inflation, though high, has not been much worse than in Britain — hence the Bank of Italy's high repute. What the public did not provide in taxes, it financed instead from the country's high personal savings. Italians used to save about twice as much as Britons. And the inevitable lack of confidence has left the lira chronically weak, usually giving Italy export growth and a respectable trade balance. The price was high interest rates, but the economy still grew faster than the EC average through most of the 1970s and 1980s.

Gradually, however, the imbalances have built up into a tottering top-heavy structure. The national

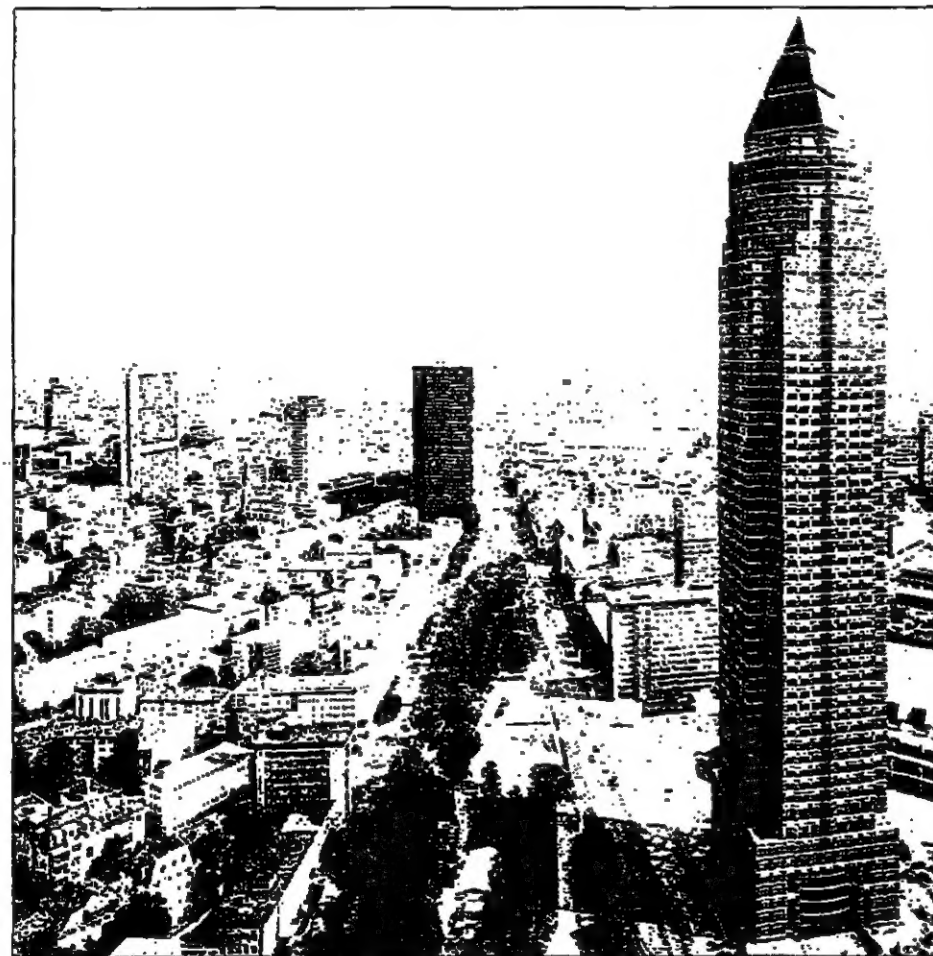
debt has grown to 120 per cent of GDP, marginally below Belgium's but more than twice the burden in Britain, France or Germany. And as the national debt has built up, so has the interest. Fifteen years ago, it absorbed 4 per cent of GDP. Now it takes more than 10 per cent, eating up the entire Budget deficit.

That means excess government spending is no longer doing anything to stimulate the economy or to offset the damper of high money interest rates. Indeed, Italians have got used to their splendid welfare system and save less and less, if not yet so little as the British. To finance the deficit, therefore, the state must either crowd out private investment or rely more on foreign lenders, developing a Mexican-style nexus between lira weakness and higher domestic interest rates. Since 1987, this naturally dynamic economy has grown even slower than the EC average, providing a lesson for anyone who still believes in the illusory benefits of deficit finance.

To prop up this edifice, the lira needs the boost to confidence that a central banker's skills can bring. But that is not enough. Signor Dini can speed privatisation of enterprises now held back by the state. Dismantling the coked-up locomotive that once powered Italy, without stranding the train, would be an heroic labour for a decade or more — not something for a temporary team of technocrats without a popular mandate.

David Rudnick explains why Frankfurt needs British standards

German boardrooms blink in clear light of disclosure



Frankfurt has ambitions to become one of Europe's leading financial centres

A wind of change is blowing through German boardrooms. Historically, Germany's corporate strength has come from stable, long-term financial support from powerful shareholder banks. This has released German companies from the proverbial short-term twitching of their British and American competitors, providing breathing space for strategic planning and long-range investment untroubled by fears of shareholders' strikes or hostile takeover bids.

But times are changing. A study by Christian Wenk, of Standard & Poor's, the credit-rating agency, confirms that German companies are relying less on banks' lending and support. It suggests that they are increasingly frequenting international bond markets, and showing more predilection for the Anglo-Saxon habit of listing on domestic and international stock markets. While an equity culture has yet to emerge in Germany — there are still fewer than 700 quoted companies — a cultural shift does seem to be under way.

Deregulation and privatisation are likely to accelerate the process, albeit gradually. But the Government has already sold over half its stake in Lufthansa, and Deutsche Telekom's partial sell-off is imminent.

Ambitions to promote Frankfurt as a leading European financial centre — Finanzplatz Deutschland — are adding further impetus, even if London remains unrivalled as the nerve centre of the world investment banking. (Deutsche Bank's recent move to the Square Mile eloquently proves the point). But to attract big international investors such as UK and American institutions, much higher standards of company disclosure are called for.

They are on the way. Up to now, German companies have had to disclose only those shareholdings exceeding 25 per cent, against a disclosure threshold as low as 3 per cent in Britain.

Legislation introduced on January 1 will require disclosure of block shareholdings of more than 5 per cent, which should make it easier to disentangle Germany's complex patterns of shareholding and cross-ownership, and pinpoint companies' principal shareholders.

In a similar attempt to catch up with the Anglo-Saxons, Bonn introduced stringent legislation in August outlawing insider trading. Respectable academic opinion had regarded it as helping to smooth market trading by stimulating as well as manipulating the market, but pressure from a raft of EU directives aimed at protecting investors, combined with the refusal of

foreign companies to look at a Frankfurt listing while insider trading remained legal, finally swept the anachronism away.

But Germany's accounting system is still opaque by British or American standards. Mr Wenk cites an old adage: a good balance sheet in Germany is better than it looks; a bad one is worse. This distortion arises from income smoothing — rounding figures up or down to iron out distortions caused by normal short-term cyclical fluctuations.

Such flexibility may startlingly affect the way companies report their results. Mr Wenk explains: "In prosperous periods German companies state profits conservatively in order to ensure sufficient reserves to support earnings and meet commitments to creditors in harder times." This might explain how Daimler-Benz last year recorded a DM600 million profit in German terms and DMI billion in US terms.

Mary Keegan, director of professional standards at the accountants Price Waterhouse, adds that UK and US company accounts are similar in strictly reflecting today's environment, while the German approach takes account of a longer-term trend. Stating profits conservatively also, course, reduces the company's

tax bill. On the downside, it may unintentionally depress the share price, and as German companies slowly start reducing their overwhelming reliance on bank borrowing and woo equity funding, instead, they are beginning to realise they cannot go on automatically treating shareholders' interests as secondary to those of bank creditors.

One or two German corporates are already showing the rough with the smooth in their accounts. In order to get a listing on the New York stock exchange, Daimler-Benz has had to comply with NYSE disclosure requirements.

They are sometimes accused of being traitors to German accounting practice, says Mr Wenk, "but they reply that Anglo-Saxon accounting standards are inevitably emerging as the international norm, in the way English has emerged as the financial world's lingua franca." Other companies including Lufthansa, Deutsche Telekom and Veba, the energy-based conglomerate, are thought likely to follow in Daimler's footsteps (or tyre tracks) and seek a US listing on US terms. The EU is doing it bit too, with directives aimed at harmonising European accounting systems. More open financial reporting is part of a general change in the philosophy of corporate governance affecting Germany and other EU partners as the implications of the single European market sink in.

Market-based convergence of corporate strategy across the EU is likely to mean less emphasis on consensus and more exposure to market forces for German corporates. The weaker ones will be less protected from takeover bids, so opportunities for mergers and acquisitions should increase, helped, according to Douglas Paterson, chairman of the German markets group at consultants Coopers & Lybrand, by the "European passport" allowing free establishment of financial services across the EU.

A case for monetary tightening

Monetary tightening dampens demand in many ways. The exchange rate (absent a crisis) is supported by higher short rates, and mortgage rates shift spending power from borrowers (high spenders) to people with cash on deposit (who tend to save). Wealth effects operate via the public's holdings of stocks and bonds as well as property in the US, but only the latter is important in the UK, where the current sluggishness of house prices, partly attributable to rising short rates, helps to make consumers very cautious. Moreover, dearer money may cause postponement of investment and consumption, although such effects are difficult to detect and depend on long yields as well as short rates.

One other route can at times be the most important of all: choking off the availability of finance. In theory, poor credits should lose access first. In the

bad old days of credit rationing in the UK 15 years ago, the first person in the queue on the first day of the month got the money. The financial system in the UK and US is now better, not least because the relatively transparent corporate bond market has gained market share from the banks. Even so, the process of cutting off funds can still create some spectacular discontinuities.

For central bankers, the dilemma is that they want to derive poorer credits of funds, because this is such an important transmission mechanism for monetary policy, but they want the move to be orderly. Getting the balance right is difficult enough in a country such as Germany where financial innovation is slow, and almost impossible in nations where the system changes rapidly.

The massive inflow of funds to emerging markets has stoked up a boom, with indus-

trial output in major Latin American nations rising some 10 per cent over the past year, and in emerging Asia, at almost twice that pace. Until recently, it had seemed that there might be some limited effect on these regions from Fed tightening, but apparently it would not be comparable to the debt crisis of the early 1980s, because that resulted

from over-exposure by banks, whereas this time the flow of funds was in the more transparent and liquid form of equity portfolio investment. In short, it seemed that any withdrawal of funds would be orderly.

Recent crises in countries from Mexico to Thailand show that this complacency was misplaced. Funds are being cut off with the brutality of an

on-off switch, not the subtlety of a dimmer. A similar effect is visible in Europe. The veiled hint of a move to tighter policy by the Bundesbank has de-stabilised currencies and bond markets in the high-debt, low-credibility countries.

Although there will not be political and economic instability on the scale that followed the debt crisis 15 years ago, policies are already being tightened in nations ranging from Argentina and Canada to Sweden and Spain. The sources of rapid global growth, which helped the UK to enjoy an export-led recovery and a balance of payments move into surplus last year, will falter during 1995, creating a worldwide slowdown, perhaps even recession.

This is double-edged for gilts. By the end of the year, it means a gloomier environment of less growth and lower bond yields. It means a Fed funds rate around the 7 per cent level

rather than 8 per cent or higher as some had feared. In response, the Bundesbank will probably tighten less than the market fears. Meanwhile, the hurdle that the UK has to jump to be classed as credible has been raised. The slightest sign of backsliding will be punished by an unfriendly international market, so Chancellor Clarke would be well advised to start outdoing Governor George in pressing for rate rises. The result would be rapid rate rises over the next few months, but a low peak, perhaps 7.5 per cent this summer. If the result of moving fast is a touch of monetary overkill, then Mr Clarke may not mind too much, since a sharply slowing economy at the end of this year would make it far easier to justify tax cuts to Mr George.

GILES KEATING
Chief Economist
CS First Boston

RADIO CHOICE

The sound of LSO music

The LSO: 90 Legendary Years. Classic FM, 7.00pm.

I predict that Jon Tolansky's history of the London Symphony Orchestra will be quoted in years to come as radio's most detailed charting to date of a musical ensemble's fortunes. Tolansky presents the series, produces it and does the interviewing. The script, too, is his — and here he plays his trump card. Having control of his material, he can balance his own judgment of the LSO's accomplishments against that of past and present conductors and players. And always, there are the excerpts from LSO recordings which say it all. In effect, "If you don't believe what you've just been told, then just listen to this". Tonight's episode is a roll-call of great conductors during the 11 years André Previn was the LSO's principal conductor.

A Book at Bedtime, Radio 4, 10.45pm.

George MacDonald Fraser's readings from his book *Quarrelled Safe Out Here* help to explain how he came by the military know-how that informs his Flashman novels. It is an account of the time he spent fighting the Japanese in Burma in 1945. He was a section scout with the 17th Black Cat Division of the 14th Army. Churchill called the greatest army since Xerxes crossed the Hellespont. You must wait for tomorrow night's episode to be reminded of Fraser's talent for making lightning sketches that capture the fundamentals of character. Tonight, he describes what was, literally, his first smell of the enemy.

Peter Daville

RADIO 1

FM Stereo, 4.00am Bruno Brookes, 6.30 Steve Wright, 8.00 Simon Mayo, 12.00 Lisa L'Anson, including at 12.30 12.30pm Newsbeat, 2.00 Nicky Campbell, 4.00 Mark Goodier, including at 4.30 The Amazing Spiderman, 7.00 Evening Session, including Smash or Trash, a review of new releases, 8.00 Lee and Henry, comedy series, 10.00 Mark Radcliffe, 11.00am Lynn Parsons


RADIO 2

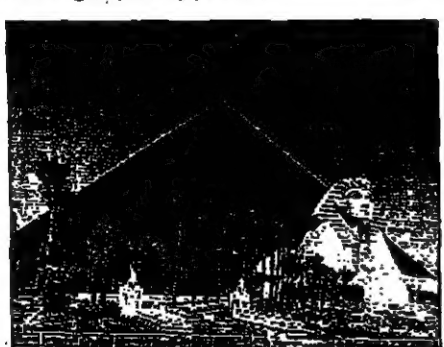
FM Stereo, 6.00am Martin Kimer with the Early Show, 6.15am Pause for Thought, 7.00 Sarah Kennedy, 8.15am Pause for Thought, 8.30am News, 1.30pm John Peel, 2.00pm Glastonbury, 3.30pm Ed Stewart, 5.45pm John Peel, 7.00 Hubert Gregg, 8.00am News, 8.15pm News, 8.30pm Bob Geldof with Dancin' Band Days and at 8.00pm Big Band Era, 8.30pm Big Band Special, the BBC Big Band under Barry Forgie, 8.00am Humphrey Lyttelton, 10.00am Desert Discs, 11.00am Desert Discs, 11.30pm Desert Discs, 12.00am Desert Discs, 1.00am Desert Discs, 1.30am Desert Discs, 2.00am Desert Discs, 2.30am Desert Discs, 3.00am Desert Discs, 3.30am Desert Discs, 4.00am Desert Discs, 4.30am Desert Discs, 5.00am Desert Discs, 5.30am Desert Discs, 6.00am Desert Discs, 6.30am Desert Discs, 7.00am Desert Discs, 7.30am Desert Discs, 8.00am Desert Discs, 8.30am Desert Discs, 9.00am Desert Discs, 9.30am Desert Discs, 10.00am Desert Discs, 10.30am Desert Discs, 11.00am Desert Discs, 11.30am Desert Discs, 12.00am Desert Discs, 1.00am 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It's always a bit hard to handle, when you discover that a funny writer is in person a humourless grouch. Accosted by an effusive member of his public in a Jewish restaurant ("I loved your play!") Simon seemed merely impatient. "That's life," he commented, when she'd gone.

Still, the film was beautifully made, with stunning aerial night images of lights and glass, and an ending lifted from Woody Allen's *Manhattan* — *Rhapsody in Blue* with fireworks. Simon no longer lives in New York, and his disconnection with street life could hardly have been clearer. It's no accident that his latest hit is *Laughter on the 23rd Floor*.

CHANNEL 4

- 6.35 *Once Upon A Time ... Life*. An animated exploration of the human body (8062500)
- 7.00 **The Big Breakfast** (54413)
- 9.00 **You Bet Your Life** (r) (s) (52974)
- 9.30 **Schools: Spring Term Preview Programme** (8935413) 9.48 **Tat, Write and Read** (8021264)
10.02 **Slaps: Two Science** (5255448) 10.20 **Plants and People** (8430583) 10.49 **The English Programme** (2903387) 11.05 **Encyclopaedia Galactica** (7518687) 11.15 **The Music Show** (8206956) 11.30 **Rat-a-Tat-Tat!** (99858096) 11.45 **Junior Technology** (9373061)
- 12.00 **Right to Reply** (r) (Telexed) (s) (69210)
- 12.30 **Sesame Street**. Entertaining early-learning series. The guest is Danny DeVito (45871)
- 1.30 **Little Miss followed by Paddington, Frootie Toes and The Wombles** (80245)
- 2.00 **Autonomie 2000**. Cartoon (r) (4142358)
- 2.16 **FILM: No Trees in the Street** (1958, b/w) starring Sylvia Syms, Joan Miller and Herbert Lom. Melodramatic tale, set in a prewar London slum about a young woman who is being forced by her mother to marry the local gang leader. Directed by J. Lee Thompson. (Telexed) (989158)
- 4.00 **Profiles of Nature: The Wonder Of Migration** (r) (332)
- 4.30 **Countdown**. (Telexed) (s) (516)
- 5.00 **The Golden Girls**. Dorothy goes out on a blind date (5050) 5.30 **Nurses**. Sanity faces up to the finity of her divorce (614)
- 6.00 **The Cosby Show** (r). (Telexed) (581)
- 6.30 **Hangin' With Mr Cooper**. American high school comedy series. (Telexed) (s) (631)
- 7.00 **Channel 4 News** (Telexed) and weather (2189921892)
7.50 **The Slot** (153448)
- 



The Lunge Hotel in Las Vegas (11.15pm)

- 10.00 NYPD Blue: Trials and Tribulations.** A repeat of the final episode of the New York police drama's last series, heralding the start next week of a new series. (Teletext 197330)
- 10.15 FILM: Accatone** (1951, b/w) starring Franco Citti, Silvana Corsini and Franca Pasut. Drama, set in Rome, about a young thug who gets his money by living off the earnings of a prostitute. When she is arrested, he is sent long with an innocent woman who inadvertently leads him to his downfall. Pier Paolo Pasolini's first feature film (23310413)
- 1.05am Eye 2 Eye.** A design quiz chaired by Steve Taylor (R 597217)
- 1.35 FILM: Head Over Heels In Love** (1937, b/w) starring Jessie Matthews, Robert Fleming and Louis Breight. Vintage British musical directed by Sonnie Hale (833920). Ends 3.10

SATELLITE

- [illegible]

ICI and Glaxo join forces to replace CFCs

By Neil Bennett, Deputy Business Editor

ICI and Glaxo have signed a key joint venture to produce the world's first CFC replacement for pharmaceuticals.

The chemicals group is also launching a large investment programme in America to boost worldwide production of CFC replacements by almost a quarter and maintain its global dominance of the market.

The joint venture between ICI and Glaxo is an important development for the chemical group, which demerged Zeneca, its own pharmaceutical company, in 1993.

Under the terms of the agreement, Glaxo is providing all the funds to build the new plant at ICI's site in Runcorn, Cheshire, and will take all its production. In return, ICI will

earn a generous management fee, reflecting the value of its proprietary technology.

The plant will manufacture a purified version of Klea, ICI's existing CFC replacement called P134a, which will be safe to inhale. Glaxo intends to use this in its top-selling inhalable asthma drugs, including Ventolin and Becotide.

The plant is expected to go into production later this year although P134a will need to be approved by worldwide health authorities, including the Food and Drug Administration in America.

Separately, ICI is proceeding with a major investment in its Klea plant at St Gabriel, Louisiana. The investment, worth an estimated £30 million, will increase the plant's capacity by more than 12,000 tonnes a year to 30,000 tonnes.

The project is the latest in a series of decisions by ICI to invest heavily in its developing

businesses. Ronnie Hampel, ICI's deputy chairman, is a fervent believer that ICI must promote its growth businesses. "Historically we have not driven the good businesses hard enough," he said. ICI controls a third of the world's market in CFC replacements, and is determined to capitalise on its technology as the market expands.

Geoff Tudhope, managing director of ICI's fluorochlorochemicals division, said the expansion was needed to keep pace with demand and that the extra capacity would come on stream next year. "Customers are switching over fast and sales are rising rapidly," he said.

Under the terms of the Montreal Protocol, all manufacturing of CFCs, which are thought to deplete the ozone layer, had to cease in Europe at the end of last year.

Mr Tudhope said that prices for CFC replacement had fallen sharply in the past two years despite rising demand. "There is a huge price differential in some areas as some players seek to get a position in the market. But ICI was in early and we have brought unit costs down." Prices have fallen by as much as 30 per cent in the past two years.

The expansion of the St Gabriel plant will bring ICI's production capacity of Klea to 55,000 tonnes a year and keep it in contention with DuPont, the other main producer of CFC replacements.

ICI has now built a plant at Runcorn to produce commercial quantities of an industrial version of Klea, called Klea 32. This can be used in factories and large freezer units where temperatures are as low as -50C are required. ICI's board is expected to be asked to sanction a large investment programme in Klea 32 later this year in an attempt to ensure that the group has substantial capacity to manufacture the chemical from 1996 onwards. Demand for an industrial CFC replacement is expected to surge in 1996 since the Montreal Protocol calls for an end to manufacturing of industrial grade CFCs from the end of this year.



Roger Elmhorst, left, chairman of Zotefoams, and Bill Fairservice with foam blocks from their flotation-foam company

By Our Deputy Business Editor

BP buyout heading for market at £50m

A FORMER part of BP's chemicals division is planning a £50 million return to the stock market. Zotefoams, a polyethylene foam producer bought out by management from BP two years ago, is coming to market valued at an estimated £50 million.

The float will make millions of the five directors who organised the buyout. Bill

Fairservice, managing director, and his colleagues took a 28 per cent stake in the buyout vehicle for £500,000. After the float, their stake will be worth an estimated £10 million.

Zotefoams, based in Croydon, has more than doubled its profits since the buyout.

Last year, it estimates, it made an operating profit of £5.4 million, up 39 per cent on 1993. That compares with £2.4 million in 1992, its last year in BP. During those two years, turnover has risen by 35 per cent, to £17.4 million.

The float, sponsored by Nat-

West Markets, will raise £15 million to pay off borrowings and preference shares arranged at the buyout. This will leave Zotefoams debt-free and well placed to expand.

The company, with 190 staff, has begun an £8 million investment programme that should increase its manufacturing capacity by more than half.

The buyout cost only £20 million, even though BP had invested a similar sum on improving facilities.

GEC ahead in Far East power station bids

By Ross Tieman, Industrial Correspondent

GEC ALSTHOM is poised to win almost £1 billion of work on the construction of two power stations in the Far East.

The company, a 50/50 joint venture between GEC of Britain and Alcatel Alsthom of France, is the clear front runner for two projects in the Philippines and China.

If the bids are successful, about half the manufacturing work is likely to come to Britain.

The most valuable deal for GEC Alsthom is likely to be the £900 million contract to design, build, finance and operate a 600-megawatt coal-fired power station on the Philippine island of Luzon. GEC Alsthom, which is bidding in partnership with Gordon Wu, the Hong Kong financier and construction magnate, would expect to secure work equal to 60 per cent of the project value.

Financing arrangements for three-quarters of the funding are reported to be already in place, along with certain guarantees from Britain's Export Credits Guarantees Department and Coface, its French counterpart.

Under the proposals, the GEC Alsthom consortium will operate the station for 25 years, after which it becomes the property of the Philippines' National Power Corporation.

At the same time, the Anglo-French group, bidding in partnership with Framatome, the French nuclear plant constructor, is believed to be front runner to win a £1.8 billion contract to build the Daya Bay 2 plant at Lingao, on Hainan island, off southern China.

The twin-reactor, 2,000 megawatt plant is expected to be a replica of the nearby Daya Bay 1 plant, already being built by a team from GEC and Framatome under a contract secured before the GEC-Alcatel link was formed.

Under the Daya Bay 2 bid, Framatome would again take responsibility for the nuclear construction, while GEC Alsthom would build the conventional island of turbines and generators.

If the contracts are secured, high- and medium-pressure steam turbines for both plants are expected to be built at Rugby, Warwickshire. The low-pressure turbines would come from Belfort in France. Other electrical equipment would be drawn from both Britain and France.

Names get ruling today on payment

By Sarah Bagnall, Insurance Correspondent

THE chances of Gooda Walker names receiving a part payment of their estimated £504 million court award will become clearer today when Mr Justice Phillips rules on whether the defendants' insurance cover will respond to such a payment.

The judge will also decide on how best to divide up the funds available to meet damages awarded to Lloyd's names. The total damages claimed by names is more than £3 billion, and is significantly more than the amount of insurance cover available. That is, there is a limited amount of errors and omissions insurance cover available to meet names' claims against Lloyd's agencies.

The concern is that the first successful group actions, led by the Gooda Walker action, would ex-

haust the E&O pot, leaving nothing for later actions.

Mr Justice Phillips, the judge for the Gooda Walker and Feltrim actions, decided to tackle the issue after the Gooda Walker names' High Court victory last year. He has to decide whether damages should be paid out on a "first come, first served" basis or by giving all successful litigants a share in the E&O funds.

The rulings follow a pre-trial review on November 25, which was attended by legal representatives for most of the action groups. Those who took part have agreed to be bound by Mr Justice Phillips's rulings.

The Gooda Walker names' application for an interim payment will be heard on February 6. A date has not yet been set for the appeal against last year's High Court ruling.

Nadir faces vital payment deadline

By Colin Narbrough, World Trade Correspondent

ASIL NADIR, fugitive former head of collapsed Polly Peck International, must meet a payment deadline to the northern Cyprus government today or face sequestration of the PPI businesses he controls locally.

Last month, Mr Nadir, who has successfully denied the PPI administrators control of their asset portfolio in northern Cyprus, was forced to sell property, including his mother's house, to raise £250,000 as the first instalment of a 24-month debt settlement deal. Tansu Ciller, the Turkish

Prime Minister, has warned the northern Cyprus government that Turkey will not be able to maintain its annual support of about £50 million if the Turkish Cypriot authorities fail to collect money owed to them by local businessmen, including Mr Nadir.

Despite the New Year's Eve bombing of Everest Bank, a Nicosia bank owned by Elmas Guzelyurghu, local interest in buying the PPI portfolio has increased. Mr Guzelyurghu had been the only local businessman to have shown inter-

est in buying the PPI assets, whose book value is about £50 million. But it has emerged that the administrators are talking to "several" local interests regarding the sale of all or some of the properties.

Cetin Karahan, the northern Cyprus chief of police, said he thought the bombing was not linked to Mr Nadir, but reflected fierce local rivalry over the casino at Jasmine Court, the luxury PPI hotel. Reports circulating in Nicosia have put the instalment that Mr Nadir is due to pay

the government today at £65,000. The administrators believe that his personal assets are running out and that he will have payment difficulties during the current low season for the hotel business that he runs, the main cash generators of the local PPI portfolio.

Ibrahim Karagolu, one of the two men arrested by the police in connection with the bank bombing has firmly rejected reports that he is a close associate of Mr Nadir, or that he had anything to do with the bombing.

Saatchi & Saatchi tries to stave off legal threat

By Sarah Bagnall



Not losing hope: a director of a rival advertising agency seizes the chance to recruit outside Saatchi's head office

SAATCHI & SAATCHI yesterday promised to vigorously defend itself against any legal actions by shareholders claiming damages as a result of the departure of Maurice Saatchi, the former chairman. It also tried to place the blame for the sharp fall in the advertising agency's share price on Mr Saatchi and senior executives who have left the company to set up a rival agency.

Wendy Smyth, Saatchi's finance director, said: "I believe the events of the last ten days have been not of the company's doing, but they have been orchestrated by the people who have left the company."

The remarks follow the threat of a \$150 million legal action by US shareholders, claiming damages for the decline in the value of their holdings because of the

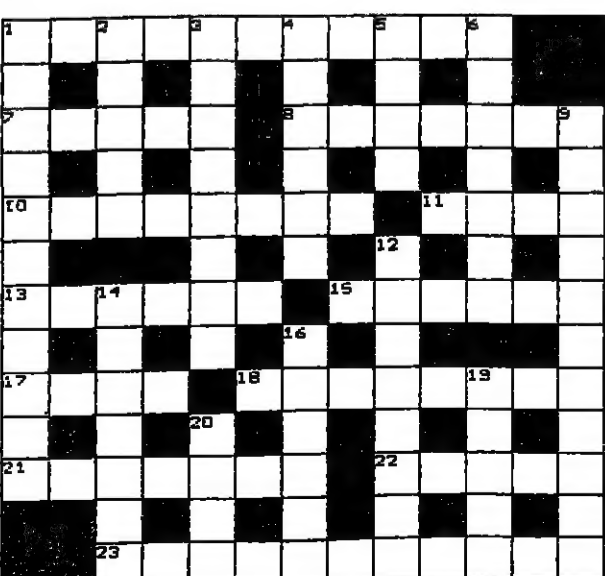
departure of Mr Saatchi. Since Mr Saatchi left on December 16, the agency's share price has fallen by a third, cutting £110 million off its stock market valuation.

William L. Rothbard, an American law firm, warned the directors in December that legal action was a possibility if they ousted Mr Saatchi as chairman without seeking the views of all shareholders at an extraordinary meeting. The company yesterday said that it had not received a writ but that "it should not be forgotten that the company is suing the former chairman and senior colleagues for conspiracy to damage the company."

Mrs Smyth, talking on BBC's *Money Programme*, said: "The board and the employees around the world believe that the people who have left have acted with the most cynical disregard for the company and its employees." In spite of

taking legal action against the senior executives, Saatchi is bound by contractual obligations to pay them a total of about £2 million. This is believed to be divided as follows: Jeremy Sinclair, the former acting chairman, £300,000; Bill Muirhead, who headed Saatchi's US business, £600,000; David Kershaw, London agency chairman, £500,000; and the two creative directors and two managing directors about £150,000 each if they are on one-year contracts. If the payments are not made, then the individuals are free to start work at the new agency immediately.

Saatchi & Saatchi is seeking a new chairman and expects to make an announcement in the next few weeks. A shortlist has been drawn up with the help of headhunters. The appointment is likely to be part-time or non-executive.



TIMES TWO CROSSWORD

No 370

ACROSS

- 1 Acquire new owner (6,5)
- 7 Knocked over (5)
- 8 Roman satirist (7)
- 10 Accuse: strongly deplore (8)
- 11 Kick; propel boat (4)
- 13 Loud, rude laugh (6)
- 15 Cheap Oriental labourer (6)
- 17 Twisted to one side (4)
- 18 Initiated (music, acquaintance) (6,2)
- 21 River mouth (7)
- 22 Very brief moment (5)
- 23 Unrelenting (11)

DOWN

- 1 Terminal blow (4,2,5)
- 2 Malicious burning (5)
- 3 From the throat (8)
- 4 Illicitly commandeered (vehicle) (6)
- 5 Maritime force (4)
- 6 Arousing, gratifying, the flesh (7)
- 9 Method of printing in relief (11)
- 12 A flirt (8)
- 14 E.M., A Passage to India author (7)
- 16 Horse good for long races (6)
- 19 Cutting implement (5)
- 20 Close to a solution (4)

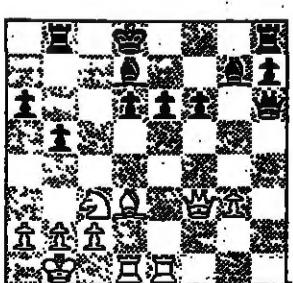
SOLUTION TO NO 369

ACROSS: 1 Spigot 5 Ripple 8 Wand 9 Omelette 10 Distasteful 11 Midge 13 Travel agent 16 Hippo 18 Longbow 21 Achilles 22 Lion 23 Frothy 24 Ledger
DOWN: 2 Pianist 3 Godot 4 Trounced 5 Reef 6 Puertile 7 Latch 12 Carousel 14 Appoint 15 Twosome 17 Incur 19 Gelid 20 Cloy

WINNING MOVE

By Raymond Keene

This position is from the game Nunn - Chandler, London 1985. At first sight, it appears that it is Black's king that should give him the greatest cause for concern. However, it is in fact another feature of Black's position that causes his downfall. How did White continue?



Solution, page 41
Raymond Keene, page 9

WORD-WATCHING

By Philip Howard

JAWBONING
a. Shaving with cut-throat razor
b. A type of moulding
c. Government PR
TERATOSIS
a. A freak
b. A scaly rash
c. Fear of reptiles

EPHEDRA
a. Byzantine emperor's throne
b. A sixth part
c. A trailing shrub
MACERATE
a. Rate of parliamentary questions per hour
b. Skinny
c. To soften by soaking

Answers on page 41

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